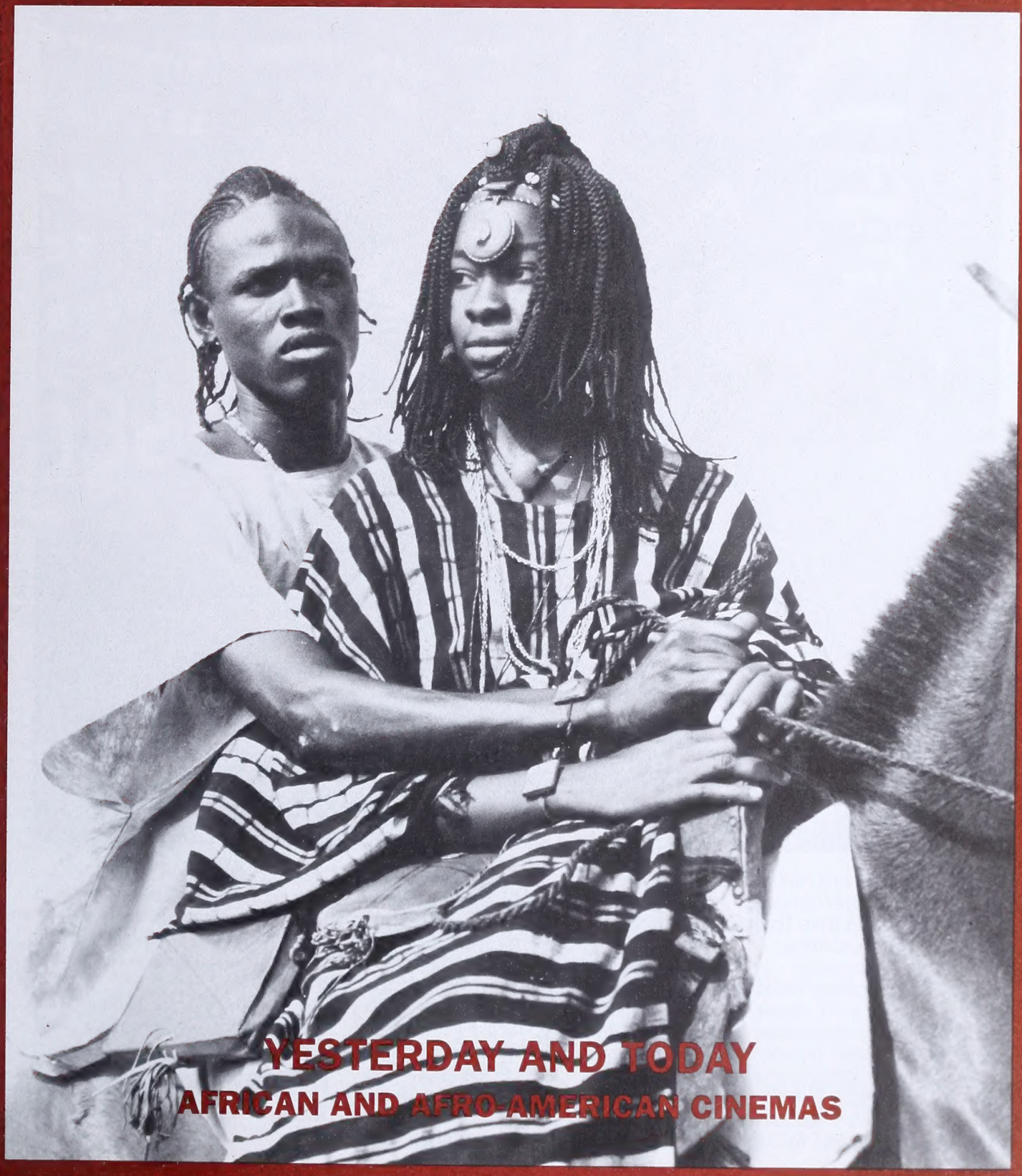
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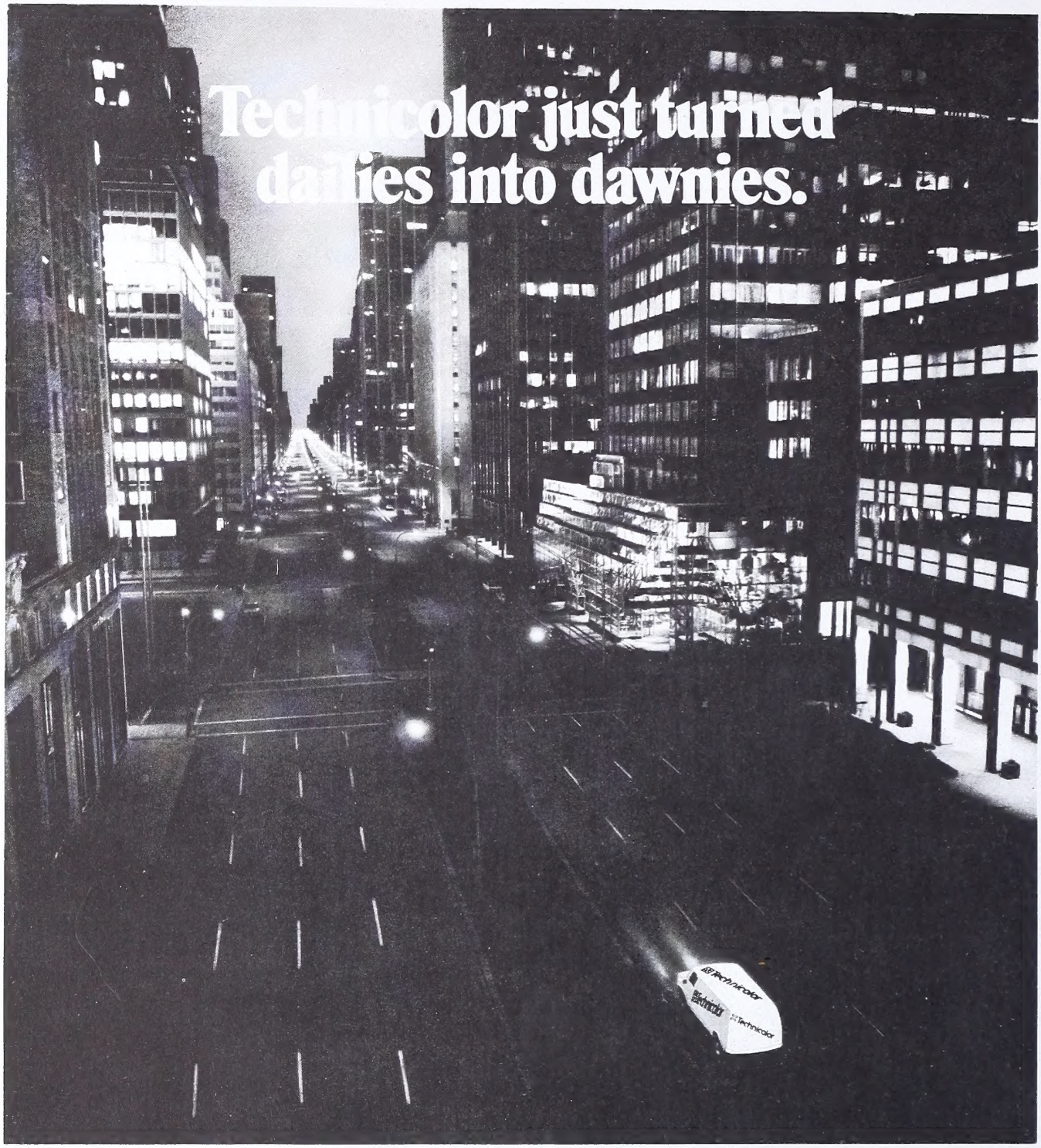
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Courtesy Museum of Modern Art

COVER: In his 1978 film *Ceddo*, Senegalese filmmaker Ousmane Sembene drew from African narrative traditions to explore the imperial history of West Africa. Ntongela Masilela discusses the new cinema that transverses Africa and the Black diaspora in "Interconnections: The African and Afro-American Cinemas." Photo courtesy New Yorker Films.

FINAL CUT AT THE IFP MARKET

When is a market not a market? That question might be asked in the wake of the 1987 Independent Feature Film Market, organized by the Independent Feature Project in New York City. With little public notice, the IFP's previous policy of nonexclusion (with the exception of work considered pornographic, overly violent, or profoundly sexist or racist) was abandoned in favor of a process where market director Robert Odell and IFP program director Karen Arikian selected the films presented in the market's feature section, turning away 18 submitted works, and exercised curatorial control over the video and works-in-progress section as well. The obvious significance of the IFM's new direction is that film- and videomakers whose work was rejected were unable to take full advantage of the concentration of buyers and programmers at the event. Since the IFM has become one of the few centralized opportunities in this country for U.S. independent producers to exhibit their work for prospective distributors and exhibitors, those denied a screening—or even granted one at the last minute when a scheduled work failed to materialize—were effectively thrown back into a pre-IFM scenario of costly and exhausting individual promotion efforts. Billing itself as "the premier showcase of new independent fiction films and documentaries," a curated IFM also implicitly validates some works at the expense of others. Two factors operating in the IFP's execution of its new policy complicated this already complex situation: vague, indirect, potentially misleading guidelines concerning the selection process and criteria for films and tapes entered in the market, and questionable procedures employed by the IFP once selections had been made.

The common definition of a film or TV market is that it is open to all comers. And that has been the common perception of how the IFM is structured. On the front page of the IFP newsletter containing an entry form for the 1987 market, the organization quotes Janet Grillo of New Line Cinema praising the event as "singularly democratic and accessible." As Arikian pointed out, there are two items in the list of "entry requirements" in the same newsletter that might lead a film- or videomaker to suspect that the market might not be entirely democratic: "Entries must be previewed by the Market Selection Committee.... Market selections are at the discretion of the IFP." Nevertheless, no description of the selection process was given. Additionally, all entrants were required to join the IFP in New York City or one of the other national IFP organizations, to the tune of a $60 per year membership, and to include a hefty entry fee with their submitted work: $250-300 for features, depending on whether the work was received before or after an August 31 deadline; $200-250 for videotapes and works-in-progress.

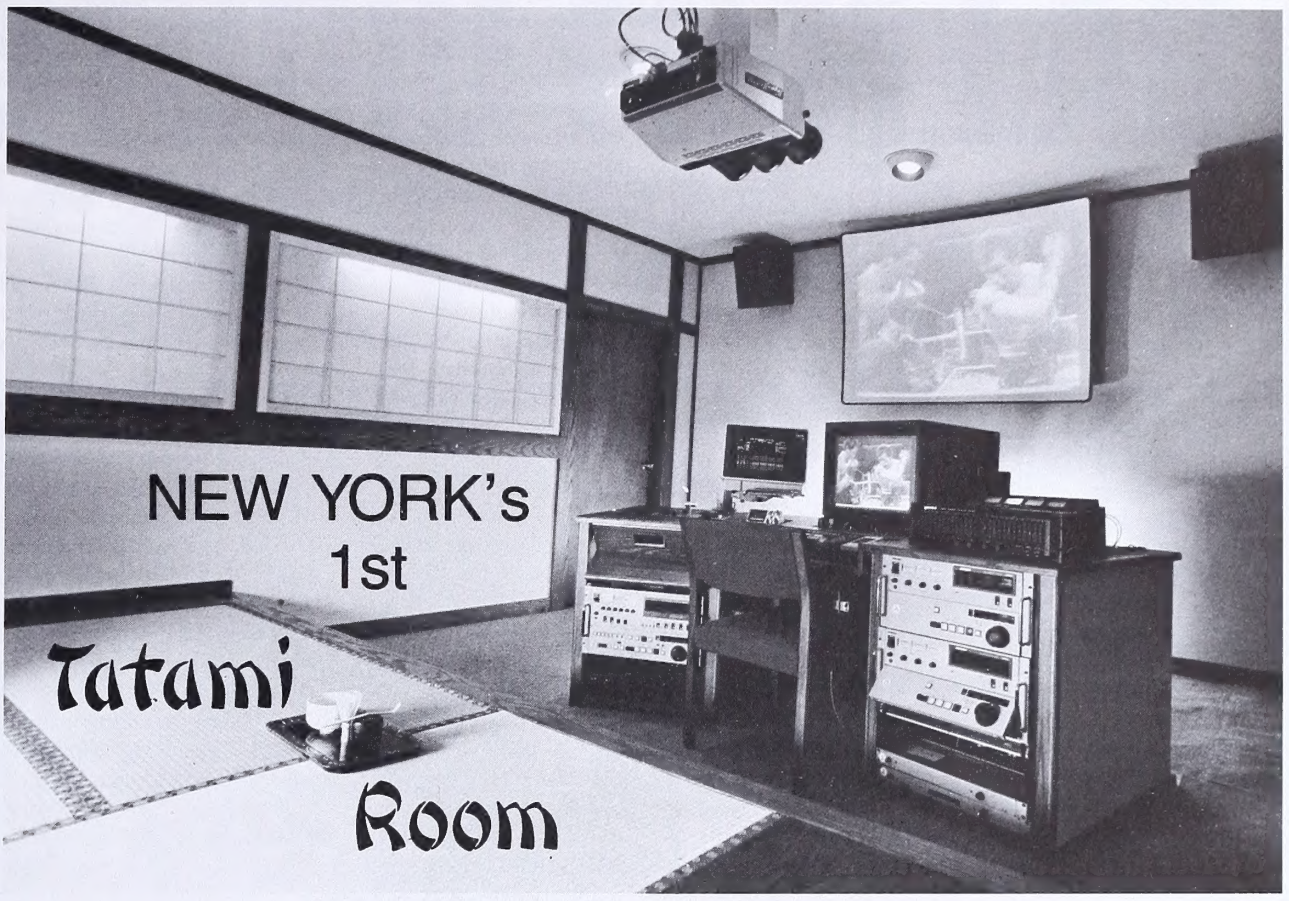
One filmmaker whose film was rejected for the market found the wording of the entry form insufficiently explicit and subsequent dealings with the IFP frustrating. Sheila McLaughlin, director and producer of *She Must Be Seeing Things*, a dramatic feature completed last March, said that she received no communication from the IFP whatsoever until she telephoned their office a few weeks before the market to inquire about the screening schedule. "Some guy got on the phone and told me, 'You're not in,'" she said. "I spoke to Robert Odell, and he couldn't tell me what criteria they used or why they rejected my film, other than they were interested in films that have a potential to attract a large audience and films without distribution." Odell agreed to mail a copy of the criteria he and Arikian applied to their selections, but she never received it.

Although her preview videocassette had been returned prior to her initial call to the IFP, McLaughlin had received no written notice of the IFP's decision. Arikian maintains that letters were mailed, and a copy of such a document was included in a packet of information she sent to *The Independent* after an interview about the new policy. That rejection letter is drafted as an enclosure with a preview cassette and a refunded entry fee. The letter goes on to enumerate the benefits of attending the market and of IFP membership in general. Although the IFP's willingness to refund membership fees is never mentioned in this letter, Arikian stated that the IFP volunteered to repay this amount as well. However, McLaughlin said that they never offered to refund her membership payment and charges that the IFP never returned her entry fee, although she requested that they do so. Instead, shortly before the market opened on October 6—and after many calls to the IFP—she received a check for $150, which represented a refund of her entry fee minus $100, the discounted price of general admission to the market. McLaughlin's protests eventually netted her a screening and inclusion in a xeroxed insert in the market program. With two days notice, she showed her film to an audience of about 35 on the afternoon of the last day of the market.

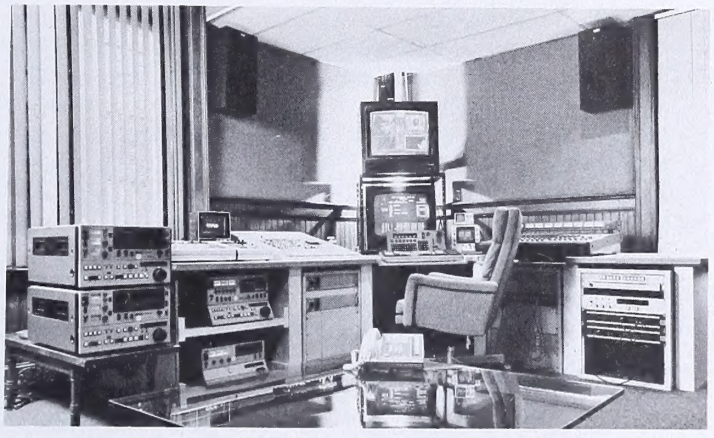
Business practices aside, the rationale for Odell and Arikian's selections remains unclear. The printed list of criteria they say governed their decisions mentions an interest in balancing fiction and documentary work, as well as supplying a variety of work in fiction genres and categories and diverse documentary categories; an emphasis on newer works that have not entered distribution and representative of every region of the country; a restriction to films with budgets under $5-million that are not overly violent and that contain no sexual or racial exploitation or stereotyping. Odell also stressed the market's interest in sponsoring world premieres, but only about half of the U.S. features in the main section actually fit that category. Even though regional representation is given priority, no provision for a balance of female and male directors or a commitment to showing work made by people of color appears in their criteria. Asked about the inclusion of only two dramatic films from the U.S. directed by women in the main section, out of a total of 39 (not counting *She Must Be Seeing Things*), Arikian and Odell stressed the relatively high number of women *producers*—44 percent—and disputed any difference between the professional titles. As for statistics on the number of works by people of color screened, Arikian couldn't say. The IFP document concludes, "The Market will always exhibit films which take creative and commercial risks," but what "risks" are envisioned is not elaborated.

Since *She Must Be Seeing Things*, a dramatic film about psycho/sexual tensions in a lesbian relationship, had no U.S. distributor when it was submitted to the market but nevertheless played to sold-out houses at several major festivals, neither the justifications Odell gave McLaughlin nor the IFP's official criteria account for its exclusion. Both Odell and Arikian refused to speak about their decision in this instance, emphasizing that the film *had* been screened. In separate interviews, they both referred to the inevitable subjectivity of any programming decisions. McLaughlin, however, speculated, "There's an idea that there's no market for this film. That kind of thinking means that 'specialized' films are killed before they can be seen by the audience that's interested." In order for the IFP to keep current with what's marketable, she believes, "They shouldn't have a couple of administrators making decisions. They should have a qualified panel."

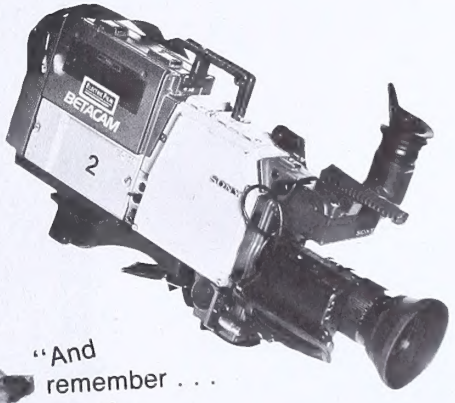
Another market refusé, John Canalli, has also worked as a film festival organizer. For a number of years Canalli was a prominent member of the Frameline group that sponsors the San Francisco Lesbian and Gay Film Festival. Like McLaughlin, he disputes the wisdom of having a selection committee composed of two staff people. He also received no written criteria from the IFP staff nor a precise reason for the exclusion of his videotape. Odell told *Independent* writer Janet Wickenhaver [see Wickenhaver's account of the market on p. 11] that the tape was a "poorly made," educa-



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tional-type video, not in keeping with the market's agenda. Canalli, whose tape *Heroism: A Community Responds* profiles AIDS service organizations in the Bay Area, expected to find other producers of AIDS documentaries at the market in order to compare experiences and trade information. And, although Cinema Guild picked up the tape for U.S. distribution right before the market, he also hoped to meet international distributors. He, too, was offered a last minute screening in the video section, but, without a catalogue listing or time to gather an audience, his tape was viewed by an audience of two writers. His plan to meet like-minded producers was similarly disappointed, because no other documentaries on AIDS appeared in the market program.

Some of the confusion about procedures and protocols might be attributed to the IFP staff's lack of preparation for the number of submissions they received. That, in any case, is part of the explanation offered by Arikian. In the past, she said, they never faced this problem, with the exception of a last minute deluge of work in 1986, following a concerted solicitation effort when faced with scanty response to routine publicity. Nevertheless, she recalls that a projection based on new feature production in January 1987 indicated the likelihood of a crunch, combined with the realization that the facilities available for the market would not accommodate all the work. While the IFP deserves congratulations for identifying and partially fulfilling an important need of independent producers, it also seems fair to conclude that between January and the August deadline for submissions, the organization could have devised a system for defining workable criteria, convened a selection committee, and notified those who were rejected and informed them of the reasons in a timely manner. And in the future, if facilities for screening more work cannot be secured, perhaps the IFP should consider a name change, since it will no longer fit the definition of a market.

MARTHA GEVER, WITH JANET WICKENHAVER

DOLLARS FOR DISTRIBUTION

For those New York filmmakers who expect to experience post-partum anxieties about distribution of a soon-to-be-completed film, the New York State Council on the Arts offers remedies. During fiscal year 1986-1987, NYSCA established a permanent category devoted exclusively to film distribution for New York State filmmakers. It funded some 16 projects last year, including Janet Forman's *The Beat Generation*, Su Friedrich's *The Ties That Bind*, Manny Kirschheimer's *We Were So Beloved*, Brent Owens' *A Cry for Help*, and Lucy Winer's *Rate It X*. The grants, ranging from $2,000 to $5,000, were applied to striking prints, internegatives, and creating promotion materials—designing, printing and mailing—as well as festival fees. All films had to be completed by the time NYSCA disbursed the grants.

"So many filmmakers finish their films in debt that we decided to set up a funding category especially for finished films," explained B. Ruby Rich, director of the NYSCA Film Program. "We wanted to encourage filmmakers to think about distribution before they finish, and we want to place them in better bargaining positions with distributors once they do finish." While NYSCA is not prejudiced against any method of distribution, commercial or nonprofit, it does stipulate that grants *cannot* be used to pay production debts.

"We judge applications by the artistic quality of the film, the clarity of the distribution plan, the relevance of that plan to the film, the markets targeted, and the filmmaker's needs," added Rich. In the case of recipient Sharon Greytak, NYSCA monies went towards striking prints for *Weirded Out and Blown Away*, making dubs for a PBS broadcast, engaging a distributor and paying festival fees—preparations which would not have been as expediently completed without the NYSCA grant.

NYSCA's unique distribution category, while open to all New York filmmakers last year, has actually existed as a pilot program since fiscal year 1983-1984. Previously, only projects that had received NYSCA support for production were eligible. "In the early eighties, with the closing of 16mm distributors such as Serious Business, Unifilm, and Texture Films, we became concerned with the future of 16mm distribution," recalled Rich. "At that time, nonprofit distributors such as Women Make Movies and Third World Newsreel were still forming and there seemed to be a growing void in distribution." The earlier grants, therefore, helped not only filmmakers, but the fledgling nonprofit distributors who, as a result of the grants, did not have to expend what little money they had preparing prints and promotion material.

In establishing this program, NYSCA also wanted to set a precedent for other funding agencies. "Often, funders are more prone to give grants for production and exhibition rather than distribution. They see distribution as an activity that generates rather than requires money." Lillian Jimenez, administrator of the Paul Robeson Fund and the FIVF Donor-Advised Funds, observed that "funders who specifically put money into distribution are a minority within the minority that funds films." Jimenez' comments suggest that NYSCA's initiative is timely, given that other funders are beginning to pay more attention to the distribution plans of projects they consider. "Distribution has become almost as important as production, especially in the eyes of the more sophisticated and issue-oriented funders like J.C. Penney, the Peace Development Fund, and Careth, who want to know how these issues are reaching audiences," Jimenez noted.

NYSCA plans to continue this funding cate-

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gory, and the Film Program encourages filmmakers who expect to have films completed within the current funding cycle to apply before the March 1 deadline. They especially encourage minority producers to submit applications.

QUYNH THAI

DRATFIELD ENDOWMENT ANNOUNCED

A new endowment has been established in honor of Leo Dratfield, distributor of independent and foreign films and cofounder of the American Film Festival, who died in 1986. The Leo Dratfield Endowment, set up in cooperation with the New York Foundation for the Arts, will support programs and awards that encourage innovative film- and videomaking and programming. During the first year grants will go toward scholarships to the Robert Flaherty Film Seminar, awards at the American Film Festival, sponsorship of a book about independent nontheatrical short films, and networking workshops. Tax deductible contributions can be sent to the New York Foundation for the Arts, 5 Beekman Street, New York, NY 10038, Attn: Lynda Hansen. For further information about specific Dratfield Endowment-supported activities, contact Julia Keydel, executive director, Leo Dratfield Endowment, 131 West 87th Street, #1B, New York, NY 10024; (212) 724-9633.

PATRICIA THOMSON

SEQUELS

During the past 20 years of public broadcasting's existence, Congress has been loathe to tithe the commercial broadcasting industry to help alleviate public television's chronic shortage of funds. But now there are signs of a change in mood. In a surprise move that delighted public broadcasters and distressed their commercial counterparts, Senate Commerce Committee Chair Ernest Hollings (D-South Carolina) proposed the creation of a **Public Broadcasting Trust Fund**, to be supported by a new two-to-five percent fee on the transfer of FCC licenses. The fee was part of the Commerce Committee's revenue-raising package. During last-minute mark-ups, Hollings also added the codification of the fairness doctrine—a political hot potato he has vowed to see passed into law ["Sequels," October 1987]. However, during the so-called "budget summit" between the White House and Congressional leaders in November, both the transfer fee and the fairness doctrine were stripped from the deficit-reduction plan. Given Hollings' commitment, this set-back will probably just delay rather than kill full Congressional review of the proposal.

Under Hollings' plan, the license transfer fee would apply to all spectrum users: broadcast stations, cable systems, cellular phones, microwave, and satellite systems. The sale or transfer of a license would be subject to a two percent fee. Under certain conditions, broadcasters would pay more: four percent if the license changes hands within three years of the last sale (making it, in effect, anti-trafficking legislation), plus an additional one percent if the licensee has violated the fairness doctrine. The Commerce Committee estimates that the transfer fee would raise $340-million in FY 1988, and would increase 10 percent each year thereafter. For the first two years the revenues would go toward deficit reduction. From 1990 on they would be funneled into a Public Broadcasting Trust Fund.

Commercial broadcasters were the only spectrum-users to oppose the transfer fee, which they did quite effectively with a massive lobbying effort. The National Association of Broadcasters labelled the fee a discriminatory tax. But NAB's opposition to the transfer fee paled next to its vehement clamour over the codification of the fairness doctrine. During oversight hearings on public television in November, Hollings complained about NAB lobbying: "I couldn't get in to talk to the President about the fairness doctrine, but I saw CBS and others in there. If you have enough money, you can get in to see those folks." The effort paid off for commercial broadcasters in the short-run. But chances are likely that Hollings will see to it that both the doctrine and the transfer fee will resurface attached to some other bill in the future.

□

The White House has nominated Bradley P. Holmes to become the fifth **FCC commissioner**. Holmes, a former aide to FCC Chair Dennis Patrick, has been with the FCC since 1984 and is currently chief of its policy and rules division in the mass media bureau.

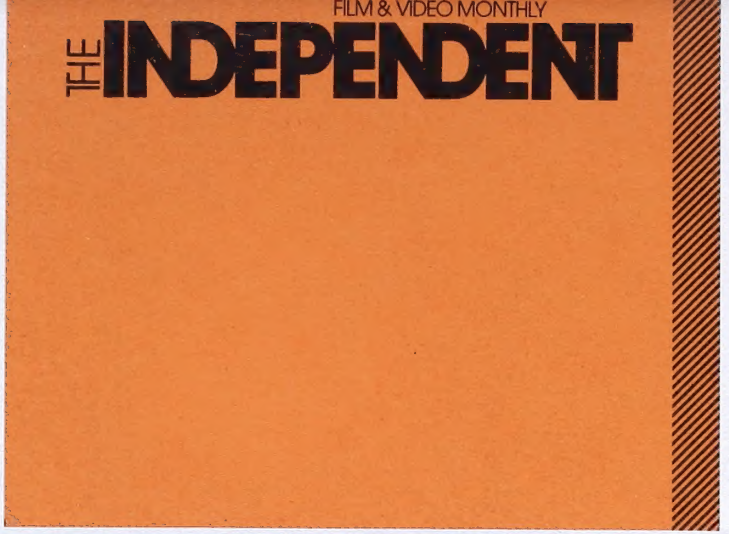
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SUPER 8 RESURGENCE FROM COAST TO COAST

Toni Treadway

Super 8 partisans used to be either the amateurs or the avant-garde among filmmakers. In the late sixties and seventies there were countless hobbyists making mini-Hollywood films, screened to the delight of friends, or movies of the family at the beach replayed at gatherings in living rooms. Then, too, there were strange mixed-media experiences in artists' lofts, with moving cameras, moving projectors, gyrating participants, and perverse, mad, or romantic personal diary images, breaking up or extending the groundwork already laid by experimental filmmakers of the fifties and sixties. In the eighties amateurs and hobbyists have moved on to half-inch and 8mm video. As this shift occurred, more serious artists have been attracted to super 8 film for its affordability, portability, image quality, and the variety of options when it is employed in conjunction with video.

That's the news for super 8: the range of its uses and its respectability is increasing. In film or video production, for training young filmmakers, as an element of performance or installation art, super 8 film remains the window through which many beginners enter the media arts and a beloved (although archaic) tool in the kitbag of an experienced media artist. Dan Reeves, Branda Miller, and Bill Seaman—all established video artists—have been supported by the prestigious Institute of Contemporary Art/WGBH Contemporary Art Television Fund for their video work. Each artist can comfortably manipulate high-tech video postproduction equipment to create his or her videotapes. Yet, each has chosen to originate some imagery on super 8.

Branda Miller, for instance, recently shot black and white super 8 in Times Square at night, then transferred and edited the footage on video to create her section of *Time Code*, an international coproduction between television stations, artists, and independent producers in seven countries. Reeves incorporated super 8 footage in his latest videotape *Ganapati: A Spirit in the Bush*, as did Seaman in *Telling Motions*. Filmmaker Albert Gabriel Nigrin used the graininess of black and white super 8 to advantage in his *Gradiva* and *Aurelia*, achieving dream-like qualities. *Gradiva*, in which a woman wanders through the Gaudi cathedral in Barcelona, was recently projected as the short before a screening of Francoise Truffaut's *Two English Girls* to a full house—125 people—at the Film Co-op in Central New Jersey, a collaborative screening project of a university and a media group. And last fall, the American Film Institute's Michael Nesmith Award in Music Video went to Charles Jevremovic and Lisa Monrose of Danger Video, who shoot super 8 almost as often as video. Their award allowed them to produce a new work at the AFI/Sony studios, and the result was the tape *Soul Soldier*. Throwing Muses composed a song, which be-



An animation still from a film produced by a student at Lynn Wadsworth's workshop on the Red Lake Indian Reservation.

Photo: Karen Sherarts, courtesy Film in the Cities

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Director Jose de Vega (far right) surveys a scene in progress from *Harusume Spring Rain*, shot by a Visual Communications crew.

Courtesy Visual Communications

came the base for the Monrose-Jevremovic team's embroidery of pictures, playful glitches, and floating TV sets combining Betacam and super 8 footage.

Some artists talk of super 8 having its own "look," an image quality identifiable as film with higher resolution than images produced with inexpensive video cameras, but with less resolution than 16mm or 35mm film. The miniscule size of super 8 film emphasizes the grain structure of the emulsion, and, when transferred to video, the grain can be enhanced or the film speed slowed, a technique sometimes used to evoke an aura of timelessness. The possibility of emphasizing the emulsion intrigues some artists who want to force viewers to look *into* images in order to consider their construction. And the visual characteristics of super 8 contrast with the rather hard-edged and cartoon-like quality attainable with video. A mix of both materials can be manipulated for a variety of ends by a visual artist.

Often, open screenings confirm the hypothesis that super 8 functions well as an introduction to new cinema. At an open screening in June at Film Arts Foundation in San Francisco, 65 people stuffed into FAF's office to see 13 new works; eight were super 8 films. FAF's program director, Robert Hawk, knew none of the filmmakers personally but reported that most were young, in their twenties, although one was a senior citizen. The works ranged from "abstract to naïve in style," according to Hawk. Six of the eight super 8 films were screened with sound on audio cassette and the filmmaker standing alongside the projector. One artist etched and painted on super 8 film. ("Can you believe anyone could work on something that small?" Hawk asked.) A large number of films were in black and white, which seems to have found a growing but so far underground popularity among young filmmakers, although evidence of this infatuation can be seen on MTV as well.

At the IMAGE media center in Atlanta super 8 filmmakers show up at open screenings with spoofs, narratives, and weird experiments reminiscent of films by super 8 masters of the seventies, such as Kenny Lipton, Jim Piper, and Dennis Duggan, as well as that of the 1979-80 new wave, like Kathe Izzo's romantic narratives that combined film and performance. IMAGE's super 8 gear is most often rented by young people, which may explain why the work produced frequently reinvents the styles of their predecessors. IMAGE staff member Anthony Rue is also excited about super 8's role in multi-media art, citing an installation by filmmaker Linda Armstrong and dancer Susan Eldridge. The women rented an alternative space ("an old Kung Fu studio," Armstrong says) and combined water images on super 8 film projected on a rear screen, a six-part text on cassette, and music by Paul Kayhart with their own movements, releasing ping pong balls on the floor to simulate more water imagery at the performance's climax.

Elsewhere, super 8 serves media centers involved with teaching young people media production. In Houston, the Southwest Alternative Media Project has equated super 8 with community activism since the early seventies, when James Blue, Ed Hugetz, and Brian Huberman created Fourth Ward films. Working out of Hugetz' van, they filmed local subjects or taught people in various communities to make their own films. Hugetz admits that he'd still use super 8 for these kinds of projects if he had a choice, but SWAMP now has access to the local public television station's video production equipment—a resource that no media center can afford to refuse.

Hugetz is totally convinced that super 8 is the way to teach media-making. "If kids start with video, they don't learn anything. But if they start with film, they learn the silent era of film, lessons of composition, and the power of visual material," he declares. Because "super 8 gear is getting real hard to find down here in Texas," Hugetz admits to bouts of pessimism about the viability of super 8, but he continues to support super 8 filmmakers like Kim Crabb through SWAMP's artist-in-residency programs in the public schools. Such visiting artist programs often give students their first media production experiences, and the groups served by SWAMP's program are always a racial, ethnic, and social mix. The work by these young filmmakers is then programmed on local cable

TV. SWAMP also produces a program composed of accomplished local independent productions, *The Territory*, as a series on the Houston PBS station. Hugetz proudly states, "*The Territory* is doing really well engaging an audience, which we see when we have phone-ins. Film and video can prosper when there's a dynamic audience to receive and react to it."

Teaching super 8 filmmaking is also a key element in Minneapolis-based Film-in-the-Cities' artists residency programs, coordinated by Karen Sherarts. At their Summer Intermedia Workshop, instructor Benita Wahl and two art student interns, Jackie Esse and Tibbetha Shaw, gave a four-week intensive course in photography, film, and video to 15 talented 13- to 18-year-olds from various locales in Minnesota. When allowed to choose their preferred medium for a final project, half the students opted for black and white super 8. Like their peers in Atlanta, they like its graininess, the chance to experiment with dramatic lighting effects, the camera's portability, and the tactile nature of film editing. One production from this group, a postmodern, Bruce Connoresque collage film called *Take the Skin Heads Bowling*, by Chris Latchana, James Orndorf, and Mark Wojahn, employed hand-colored black and white images. A fellow student filmmaker, Sheila Delaney, created *To Melt*, a poetic juxtaposition of images of people from different generations. For elementary school-children, FITC offers short-term workshops, such as a 10-day session for Chippewa children led by filmmaker-sculptor Lynn Wadsworth at the Red Lake Indian Reservation in Northern Minnesota. Since no full-time art program exists in that community, Wadsworth's introduced both teachers and pupils to the media arts. Due to the brevity of the program, the children were instructed in cut-out animation techniques, which they used to produce strong, colorful, graphic stories on film.

Not only kids benefit from lessons in super 8 filmmaking. The Boston Film/Video Foundation has contracted Tim Wright and Don Vogt of Jamaica Plain Newsreel to teach four to six sections of basic filmmaking with super 8 every year, and the enrollment expands each term. Elliot Kaplan, who runs the education program at BF/VF can only guess why interest continues to increase, but he notes that all film courses (animation, 16mm editing, and basic filmmaking) have waiting lists and extra sections. Of the 900 people taking BF/VF media courses per year, about 75 sign up for super 8. He attributes some of the popularity to the reputation of the Vogt-Wright duo, who bring basic cameras, cassette recorders, and unbridled enthusiasm to their classes. A group effort from one of their sections several years ago netted the first-time filmmakers responsible for *Fanyard Wharf* a top honor from Hometown USA, the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers' annual festival. In 1987 Michael Phillips, another student of Vogt's, won the super 8 prize at the New England Film Festival

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with his short black and white film *The Chair*.

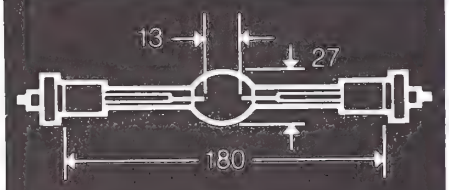
Another success story about super 8 filmmaking programs comes from Visual Communications in Los Angeles, which started its Filmmaker Development Program in 1983. With funding from the National Endowment for the Arts' Expansion Arts Program, VC teaches scriptwriting and film production to people from Los Angeles' Asian American community. Based in the entertainment capital, VC benefits from the high level of skills practiced by part-time staffers and friends with jobs in Hollywood—actors, journeyman carpenters, and other union craftspeople. The completed films also draw on the experiences, interests, and talents of VC's community and reflect its concerns. Projects realized in Pam Tom's 1986 documentary production classes, for example, ranged from a film on the homeless in Little Tokyo to a portrait of an beloved aging Japanese language teacher. Narrative films made by students have dramatized political and social situations, dreams and myths, and frequently feature outstanding performances by local people, as in Chris Tashima and Kaz Takeuchi's films. One animated super 8 film by a VC student, Laureen Berger's *Kabuki Suite*, employed traditional Japanese theatrical forms, while Merrilyn Yamada's *Don Giovanni* gave Mozart's hero a humorous aspect in an animation work using drawings and cut-outs. This past summer VC showcased films by recent graduates at a fund-raising event, an Asian American chili-cooking competition and special screening. There are also plans afoot to transfer some of the student-produced super 8 films to video, which will give them a greater audience via TV outlets.

Meanwhile, VC executive director Linda Mabalot has also been taking advantage of super 8. She recently received a grant from the Foundation for Independent Video and Film's Donor-Advised Fund for her project on hunger in the Philippines, produced in collaboration with Antonio deCastro. Some early production on the film was shot in super 8 on the island of Negros by the two-person crew, lightening their filmmaking baggage considerably. And VC's Kaz Takeuchi carried super 8 while in Japan to gather images for his forthcoming documentary on fingerprinting of Koreans by the Japanese.

The proliferation of super 8 used in conjunction with other media is astounding, even though super 8 equipment and services are becoming harder to find. Still, the thousands and thousands of cameras left over from home movie days, rejected by the hobbyists, remain in working order, and more artists are picking up a tool that works for them. With consumer video equipment on the rise, the hobbyists' loss is the artists' gain.

Toni Treadway is the author, with Bob Brodsky, of Super 8 in the Video Age *and cofounder of the International Center for 8mm Film and Video.*

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ADDED ATTRACTIONS:
THE SIDEBAR AT THE INDEPENDENT FEATURE FILM MARKET



From *Victor Matthews—'87*, Eric Weissbrod's experimental short about a New York City artist, screened at the sidebar of this year's Independent Feature Market.

Courtesy filmmaker

Janet Wickenhaver

From its somewhat humble but noble beginnings, before "independent film" was a household word, the Independent Feature Film Market, the New York-based Independent Feature Project's main event, has grown in size. But has it grown in scope? The ninth annual market last October featured more buyers of talent and product—238 buying organizations, up from last year's high of 155—more films, more mainstream films, more deals at least germinated, more contacts made, more parties packed with more people. Indeed the market has swollen beyond its facilities at the Department of Cultural Affairs' building at Manhattan's Columbus Circle and WNET-Channel 13's video screening facilities down the street.

The atmosphere at the IFM video screening section and works-in-progress sidebar on the second floor of Channel 13's Manhattan office building, where films and tapes are projected in large-screen video, is more casual than that at the main feature section. Realizing that the needs of independent film- and videomakers are varied and involve not only providing a showcase for completed features films, but also assistance at the fund-raising stage, three years ago the IFM decided to provide a forum for screening partially completed work for potential investors, presale dealers, talent scouts, and others. In the same section, the market also screens shorts (that is, anything not feature-length), videotapes of all styles and lengths, as well as trailers and roughcuts of features. Because the sidebar is a potpourri, its offerings vary wildly in quality and length. Some are five minutes. Others are 95-minute roughcuts that need money to pull a print. Some are evidently student shorts, others are polished documentaries or works-in-progress by established film- and videomakers.

"There are levels of sexiness at the market," says documentarian Oren Rudavsky, who also attended the market last year with his award-winning *Spark among the Ashes*. "It's different for features than documentaries, different again for works-in-progress. The least sexy thing is a documentary that's not finished." Rudavsky came this year with his unfinished *A Tree Still Stands: Jewish Life in Eastern Europe* in tow. He was looking for completion funds and has subsequently gotten at least one strong nibble, thanks to contacts made at the market. That's not bad, considering he had to change his screening time several times due to last minute work on the film and had little time to drum up an audience. "The key thing," says now market-seasoned Rudavsky, "is not to expect miracles to happen."

A Stitch for Time, a documentary on the Boise, Idaho Women's Peace Quilt project, directed by Nigel Noble and produced by Barbara Herbich and Cyril Christo, had actually found a distributor, Jane Balfour Films, shortly before the market. But Herbich thought that the possibility for festival exposure made the market an attractive and worthwhile stomping ground. Producer Stuart Samuels showed video artist Zbigniew Rybczynski's *Steps*, a seamless blend of Eisenstein's famous "Odessa Steps" sequence and contemporary live action caricatures. Programmed at the International Television Festival at Cannes, the IFM screening seemed intended simply to show people what Rybczynski is up to. A crisply edited documentary, *David Mamet on "House of Games,"* produced by Pam Hausman, had already achieved some distribution and aired on Channel 13 while the market was still in progress and may have been been timed for the premiere of *House of Games* at the New York Film Festival. Among the short fiction entrants, *The Houseguest*, directed by Franz Harland, was one of the most stylish and got a lot of domestic and foreign attention. *Che's Revenge*, the directorial debut of editor Eva Gardos, also fared well.

Whereas feature section attendees are there for the one rather clear-cut purpose of finding distribution in as many territories as possible, produc-

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Theater becomes life in *The Idiot*, Charles Weinstein's feature about three actors whose roles in a Dostoevsky play begin to overtake their personal lives.

Courtesy filmmaker

ers of works-in-progress and videotapes have a number of possible goals in mind. Some are there just for exposure, to commune with their fellow media-makers, find investors, find out what kind of buyers are there when they do finish, identify whom to approach, or get input on directions to go with unfinished projects. Director Gary Pollard showed a five-minute segment of *Going Up*, a film-in-progress lyrically and poetically depicting the demolition and construction of a New York skyscraper. "We're here to educate ourselves," said Josh Schapiro who was repping the film, "to find out where it belongs." Neither Pollard nor Schapiro realized how much they would indeed learn about distribution and marketing.

Or about hustling. At the market it's up to the filmmaker to hustle up an audience, and for many the market offers a crash course in the art of self-promotion, if nothing else. The price of ignoring that lesson can be steep, since buyers are barraged by eager beavers, and hustling, when not obnoxious, often bears fruit. Since the sidebar isn't the main event, buyers need even greater enticement. Audiences at some of the screenings are heartbreakingly tiny. Also, weary viewers think nothing of walking out at the first sign that a film or tape isn't their cup of tea. Other screenings are packed to the gills with friends and buyers. Those who either can afford to hire a rep, are accustomed to self-hype, or have put together an eye-catching press kit are at a distinct advantage. Promotional gimmicks are also beginning to catch on at the event. The *Going Up* team sported construction hats, for instance. The makers of one of the works-in-progress hits, *Only a Buck*, a movie about a man who quits his job to make a movie, had pasted one dollar bills on the cover of their press kit. The promo-war flavor of the market is perhaps inescapable, since much hinges on getting attention. Where art and commerce meet, commerce still has the upper hand. One learns how to talk about one's film and to whom.

One way of knowing who to talk to at the market was by the color-coded badges. Pink badges signified buyers, blue for filmmakers or someone representing a film, white for various other categories including press. The market is definitely one of those events where eyes go directly to lapels. For some the system was uncomfortable, for others just haphazard. Jennie Livingston, attending with her documentary-in-progress *Paris Is Burning*, about a present-day black and Hispanic subculture, commented, "You're really a victim of chance in terms of meeting the appropriate buyer. I met someone who might handle the film in Europe by accident. The IFP should set up tables with definite times when someone representing the buying company



will be there." There were several other complaints about buyer accessibility, exacerbated by the fact that inundated buyers would sometimes remove their badges. Some people downplayed the importance of getting people to come to a screening, emphasizing instead the need to establish contacts that pave the way for future phone calls and letters. A beneficial feature of the sidebar was the availability of a special video screening room for buyers who missed a potentially interesting film.

Although it may be too early to tally the results of the market, market director Robert Odell reports that as a result of screenings in the works-in-progress section, Home Box Office and Miramax committed finishing funds for two fiction films. He also terms this year's market "the most successful ever, in every respect." But growth can also have a downside. Growth does not necessarily represent expansion around a fixed center, and, therefore, can also mean a change of orientation. Amidst the general good cheer and positive feelings there were some grumblings that indicated this potential direction.

Kevin Duggan, coproducer with Geraldine Fallo of *Paterson*, a fictional work about attitudes towards work, expressed disappointment, observing, "The IFP fulfills an important need, but the group of people it is serving is narrower. Its focus is narrower. While it appears that there is more going on, more films, more deals, I think there's less really happening." There are many in the independent community who think the IFM has subtly been shifting its focus, away from presenting and helping challenging and off-beat films towards more careful and commercially viable material, or films right on the cutting edge but not too far afield. With some notable exceptions, there were a slew of careful films at the market this year, and a slew of buyers looking for the "next big thing."

This was the first year in which more films were submitted than could be accommodated in the market. In past years the market was advertised as being a nonselective event, as long as work was completed within the last year and conformed to broadcast standards, wasn't porn, racist, blatant propaganda, or sexist. This year 18 films were rejected from the feature section, and an undisclosed number from the works-in-progress/video section [see "Media Clips," p. 2]. Asked if they agreed that the market should be selective in terms of quality, most film- and videomakers said they thought the market should be even *more* selective. However, Stanley Nelson, who made *Two Dollars and a Dream*, a documentary about the first black millionairess, Madame C. J. Walker, differed, adding that he thought selectivity was to be distrusted.

The process of selection will inevitably engender dispute over policy and the market's function. Clearly, the IFP must make some choices in managing the market's growth. And some difficult questions may have to be addressed: Is it the market's mandate to serve the priorities of buyers or to help film- and videomakers with unconventional work to cultivate and educate the distributors and exhibitors who attend? Where, if not the IFP Market, will the makers of radical or unusual films and tapes be able to screen their work for the gatekeepers of the audiences they seek? And, if the process of selection is institutionalized, who then become the gatekeepers for the gatekeepers?

Janet Wickenhaver is a freelance writer and screenwriter living in Hoboken.

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THE AFRICAN AND AFRO-AMERICAN CINEMAS



A scene from *Ceddo*, written and directed by one of Africa's leading filmmakers, Ousmane Sembene.

Courtesy New Yorker Films

Ntongela Masilela

Historically, African cinema and Afro-American cinema can and should be located within the same social space of the Third Cinema-Third World Cinema. In broad terms, however, the former can be characterized by the search for and interrogation of origins, while the latter can be defined by its fight for positions and identity. African cinema seeks to establish methods and systems of production, distribution, and viewing, while Afro-American cinema struggles to intervene in established modes of cinematic production. And, while African cinema is produced within diverse political and cultural national contexts, Afro-American cinema is situated within a particular national culture, albeit one governed by complex and nuanced historical, social, and economic factors. The movement of historical events is the primary—although not the only—preoccupation of African cinema, while the examination of social mechanisms is central to Afro-American cinema. In both cinemas, however, oppression, liberation, struggle, and hope inform thematic structures and references.

In a statement of the utmost significance, Ousmane Sembene, the pioneer of African cinema and its outstanding exponent, has said that the importance of cinema in Africa is equivalent to education, science, and other institutions essential to the definition and sustenance of a vibrant and vital culture—and should thus be given the corresponding recognition. Indeed, Sembene's observation accords supreme responsibility to African cinema, since it is an artistic instrument that can play a prominent role in demystifying and eradicating certain obstacles that have hindered or deflected the development of many African countries. And, correspondingly, African cinema has examined the structures and coordinates of African history in order to analyze these same obstacles. In pursuing this endeavor, African cinema has confronted a set of cultural realities: for centuries European national histories superimposed themselves on African national histories through force and ideological distortion. This process has traumatized African national and ethnic cultures, and consequently many of them began to disintegrate, although many others were able to repulse this assault. In the process, some African intellectuals and artists lost their sense of direction and responsibility to their peoples. Films like Sembene's *Ceddo* (1978, Senegal), Haile Gerima's *Harvest: 3000 Years* (1976, Ethiopia), and Med Hondo's *West Indies* (1979, Mauritania) attempted—and in many ways succeeded—to overcome these obstacles by treating African history and herstory as an integral whole and by embellishing narrative structures with African oral narrative modes, thus establishing links between a traditional culture and modernity. These crucial contributions to African cinema enabled Sembene to take the position cited above.

A primary aim of African cinema up to the present has been to reintroduce the African into history. The political imperatives of this project are historical in range and sociological in depth. That African cinema addresses the problem of history is hardly surprising, since for approximately four centuries we Africans had been expelled from its domain by capitalism, colonialism, and imperialism. For the most part, the heterogeneity of African political, economic, and cultural structures was inverted by Euro-



A dance scene from Oscar Micheaux's *Jivin' in Bebop*.

Courtesy Museum of Modern Art

pean colonialism into the supposed homogeneity of our backwardness. The imperatives of cultural and political struggle have given African cinema the task, among many others, of retrieving and rehabilitating the uniqueness of African national cultural patterns. *Ceddo* and *Harvest* fulfill this eminent task in an exemplary fashion. At the same time, these two films—and others that could be included in this profile—have attempted to define African history: its thematic structures, its patterns and configurations, its unities and contradictions, and its meanings and significations. Whether in presentations of conflict and struggle between imperial history (of whatever colonial power) and African national history as in *Ceddo* or in the examination of class struggle in African feudal society as in *Harvest*, these films effect a demystification of the ideological biases of European colonial historiography and, more importantly, attempt to locate the proper place of Africans in history, within a global culture of nations. In bringing these interrelated themes together, *Ceddo* and *Harvest* belong within the African philosophical space opened and dominated by the theoretical writings of Amilcar Cabral (whose writings occupy a position within our national cultures comparable to that of Antonio Gramsci's work in European cultures), who articulated the theoretical concepts, the cultural forms, and the modes of armed struggle by which we Africans should re-enter African history and world history. Both films embody the lesson of the inseparability and indissolubility of politics and culture, the central construct of the conceptual framework of Cabral's writings.

While the lineage of African cinema is relatively short, the genealogy of Afro-American cinema is more extensive and different in character. Using Gramscian metaphors—while the African cinema wages a "war of movement" on the historical plane in order to expel and defeat imperialist cinematic images of blacks, Afro-American cinema has been waging a "war of position" within the U.S. cultural landscape in order to gain acceptance for its independent status and to dispel the negative images of blacks which Hollywood has perpetrated—from Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* in 1915 to *The Color Purple* in 1985. That independent Afro-American cinema, defining itself in class terms against the dominant white American cinema, has produced major figures—from Oscar Micheaux to Gordon Parks (although his position is problematic within the American black cinema)—is undeniable.[1]

The founding of Afro-American cinema was characterized by two phenomena which effected its development and are in evidence even today. In ideological terms, these films articulate historical forms of self-identification, that is, they chart, trace, and map on the landscape of dominant white consciousness authentic poetic forms of black subjectivity. And, sociologically, Afro-American cinema has existed in opposition to the Hollywood film industry's monopoly of economic institutions (production channels, distribution networks, and exhibition forums). From this perspective, it was the establishment in 1916 of Noble and George Johnson's Lincoln Motion Picture Company in Los Angeles that we can date Afro-American cinema. Their first motion picture, *The Realization of a Negro's Ambition*, not only portrayed blacks as complex individuals (in contrast to Hollywood stereotypes), but was the first film to specifically address a black audience (not, however, excluding a white audience). Other films followed this route from 1917 onwards. For instance, Booker T. Washington and his secretary Emmett J. Scott (both of the Tuskegee Institute) attempted to establish a black foothold in Hollywood, in reaction to the racism and blackphobia of *Birth of a Nation*. Their Hollywood film, *The Birth of Race* (1919), failed financially and with it their larger ambition of creating a place for black producers and directors in Hollywood failed too. The same fate befell the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People's *Lincoln's Dream* (1920). Perhaps the poor performance of these two films can be attributed to the fact that they were not produced from a truly independent base.

The fully-formed structures, concrete practices, artistic expressions, and political manifestations of an independent Afro-American cinema (as distinct from Afro-American cinema conforming to the practices and forms of the film industry) can be traced to the films of Oscar Micheaux and his independent production unit formed in 1918, the Micheaux Film and Book Company. Micheaux also established an important method for financing his independent films—securing advances from theater owners for his films, which ensured that he could work within modest budgets without jeopardizing distribution of his films. It could be argued that his contribution lay not so much in the artistic achievements of his films, many of which pandered to fashionable prejudices devoid of serious cultural critiques, but rather in his persistent efforts to establish an independent black cinema.[2] Whatever the limitations of his ideological and political culture, however, Micheaux's films—from *The Homesteaders* (1918) to *The Betrayal* (1948)—were in accord with the beliefs of W.E.B. DuBois, who identified racism as the central problem of the twentieth century, although Micheaux was never able



Disillusioned Vietnam veteran Ned Charles (John Anderson) in Haile Gerima's feature *Ashes and Embers*.

Courtesy Mypheduh Films

to take this question beyond the class boundaries of the black bourgeoisie.

Nevertheless, Micheaux introduced many of the thematic spheres within which Afro-American cinema has since concerned itself. The themes of Micheaux's films were far-reaching, ranging from the problems of interracial romance to the traumas of collapsing black marriages to the corruption of the church. But unlike Eisenstein, his contemporary whose films revolve around a central thematic object—the glorification and celebration of the past—or Vertov, who attempted to explain and clarify the struggle of the present moment, Micheaux's work lacks a conceptual center or philosophical object that would have established their coherence and rigor. This absence, in addition to the effects of imposed technical limitations, tends to make his films appear fragmented. However, one contribution to Micheaux's great credit was his casting Paul Robeson in *Body and Soul* (1924), the first step in Robeson's film acting career. In retrospect, this is especially significant because the theatrics, metaphysics, and poetics of a particular tradition of American acting, epitomized by Marlon Brando and carried on in the work of actors like Al Pacino, Gloria Foster, Robert DeNiro, Anne Bancroft, and James Earl Jones, originated with Paul Robeson's early film performances—an enduring and brilliant tradition.

It was approximately 20 years after the death of Oscar Micheaux that the black independent cinema was reinvigorated and reanimated by Melvin Van Peebles' *Sweet Sweetback's Baadassss Song* (1971). In the interregnum, Hollywood films about Afro-Americans, such as Mark Robson's *Home of the Brave* (1949), Robert Tossen's *Island in the Sun* (1957), and Stanley Kramer's *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* (1967), held sway. With the great commercial success of Van Peebles' film, Hollywood took note and began producing a cycle of black-exploitation films, including well-known successes like Gordon Park Jr.'s *Super Fly* (1972) and *The Legend of Nigger Charley* (1972). In contrast to the the fifties, when black independent cinema had fallen into eclipse, in the seventies an often sharp and uncompromising contest between Hollywood and Afro-American independent producers erupted, and—in artistic terms—in the early eighties the black independent cinema tentatively prevailed. Van Peebles, then, is important historically for having shown that an independent black film could challenge Hollywood's hegemony over the U.S. film market rather than for any intrinsic contribution he made to the enlargement and development of Afro-American aesthetics.

In the last decade, however, several films appeared that confirmed the vitality of Afro-American cinema and contributed significantly to its development—Gerima's American film *Ashes and Embers* (1982), Charles Burnett's *My Brother's Wedding* (1982), both independently produced, and Gordon Parks' *Leadbelly* (1976), a studio-financed production. A common element in all three films is that each, in its particular way, elaborates the meanings of Langston Hughes' poem "Justice":

That Justice is a blind goddess
Is a thing to which we blacks are wise:
Her bandages hide two festering sores
That once perhaps were eyes.

In *Leadbelly* Parks attempts to retrieve a unique moment of Afro-American cultural history through a portrait of the great blues singer. That Hollywood effectively destroyed the film by refusing it wide distribution is not accidental, since the film is highly political in its preservation of the cultural richness of the Afro-American heritage.[3] Burnett's *My Brother's Wedding*, on the other hand, uses the indecisiveness and hesitation of Pierce, a troubled young man who vacillates between attending his brother's wedding and a friend's funeral, to enact a metaphor of the complex and unstable dialectic of class and race for Afro-Americans in relation to social institutions in the U.S. The uniqueness of Gerima's *Ashes and Ambers* is that it successfully transposes an African oral narrative form into cinematic narrative. From this synthesis emerges an epic film, a film that symbolizes issues broader than the specific historical drama it portrays. As Gerima has explained:

> Next, there is the idea of struggle. My characters must struggle, both to define themselves and to overcome their oppression and exploitation... For instance, in *Ashes and Embers*, I wanted to present a generation in struggle through a character who had an extreme experience—fighting in Viet nam—that has left him scarred. He must fight; he must struggle to understand himself and his relationships with those around him so that he can be transformed.[4]

These three films, then, using very different means, mobilize and give direction to a politicized cultural consciousness which, at the time when they were made, was in danger of exhaustion as the conservative social agenda of Reaganism became institutionalized in the U.S.

Returning to the comparison with African cinema, the longer lineage of independent Afro-American cinema can be described as two distinct periods: the first, stretching from 1924 to 1948, the period of Oscar Micheaux's productions, was characterized by psychological representations that marked an effort to come to terms with racism in U.S. culture; during the second, from the demise of the Second Reconstruction (signalled by the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968) to the present, the dominant approach has been sociological or, more appropriately, a manifestation of sociological imagination. These two tendencies developed cumulatively and successively. African cinema, on the other hand, has been *simultaneously* informed by two structures of meaning. In part, this can be attributed to its recent formation, dating from 1963, the year when Sembene's first film, *Borom Saret*, was made. Hence, the organization of meaning according to political themes seen in more recent African cinema—exemplified by Sembene's *Xala* (1974) and Soulemane Cisse's *Baara* (1978), among other films—is adjacent to and contiguous with the historical structuring evident in Gerima's *Harvest* and Sembene's *Ceddo*. This is hardly surprising, since the affinity of the earlier films exhibit affinities with the philosophy of Frantz Fanon, while the historical work of the late seventies—*Ceddo*, *Harvest*, *West Indies*, et al.— can be aligned with that of Cabral. In Fanon we encounter a desparate and brilliant attempt to violently restructure African political systems and philosophies that emerge in the wake of anticolonial wars, while in Cabral we are presented



***Xala*, Sembene's critique of of African neo-colonialism.**

Courtesy New Yorker Films

with a reshaping and remapping of the social geography of African history.

Although it's doubtful that Gerima, Sembene, and Cisse have not read the works of these two major figures in African Marxism,[5] I do not mean to imply that their films are simply cinematic translations of their philosophical texts. Rather, I mean to indicate that the full aesthetic and historical meaning of these films can only reveal their originality within the "dialogism" between Fanon's political philosophy and Cabral's philosophy of history. Although these films indicate their unity on this continental plane, they equally differentiate themselves from each other by simultaneously articulating national cultural patterns, national ideological conflicts, and national class confrontations. Nonetheless, it possible without engaging in a complicated argument to discern an affinity between Fanon's critique of the national bourgeoisie in *The Wretched of the Earth* and the political structure of African cinema in the seventies. For example, in *Xala* the impotence, profound stupidity, and nervelessness of the African national bourgeoisie is conveyed in its true tragic dimension. The politics of the film could be summarized by the following thesis from *The Wretched of the Earth*:

> The national bourgeoisie of underdeveloped countries is not engaged in production, nor in invention, nor building, nor labour; it is completely canalized into activities of the intermediary type. Its innermost vocation seems to be to keep in the running and to be part of the racket....
>
> Seen through its eyes, its mission has nothing to do with transforming the nation; it consists, prosaically, of being the transmission line between the nation and a capitalism, rampant though camouflaged, which today puts on the mask of neocolonialism.[6]

Baara, too, in which the national bourgeoisie betrays the national interests, imitates new cosmopolitan fashion, and lacks imaginative appreciation of its own national treasures, could be seen in terms of Fanon's formulations:

> The struggle against the bourgeoisie of underdeveloped countries is far from being a theoretical one. It is not concerned with making out its condemnation as laid down by the judgement of history. The national bourgeoisie of underdeveloped countries must not be opposed because it threatens to slow down the total, harmonious development of the nation. It must simply be stoutly opposed because, literally, it is good for nothing.[7]

In conclusion, the analysis and interpretations offered here concerning distinctions within Afro-American cinema and within African cinema, and those between them, are intended to suggest some directions for criticism that takes as its point of departure the material reality of each. Certain important processes, events, and factors in both Afro-American and African cinemas have not been mentioned because of their analytical complexities.[8] What I have tried to establish, however, is that the structural coordinates of African cinema and black American independent cinema show how important it is to situate their dialectical movement within the politics of Pan-Africanism—the very Pan-Africanism represented by two names in modern black film culture, Paul Robeson and Haile Gerima.

NOTES

1. It is utterly incomprehensible how Richard Roud's 1,095 page two-volume study, *Cinema: A Critical Dictionary: The Major Film-Makers* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1980), a major standard reference work, mentions not even one important black American filmmaker, let alone an African filmmaker, whether Ousmane Sembene or Yousef Chahine. This outstanding omission underlines yet again the fact that integration of Afro-Americans into institutions that influence U.S. democracy remains a fundamental issue in that culture.

2. In a private conversation in West Berlin on March 18, 1986, Haile Gerima stated that one of the important present tasks of the black American independent cinema is to struggle against the artificially inflated high costs of film production in the U.S. The survival of the Afro-American independent cinema hinges on this.

3. See Gordon Park's fascinating interview in: *The Cineaste Interviews: On the Art and Politics of the Cinema*, Dan Georgakas and Lenny Rubenstein, eds. (Chicago: Lake View Press, 1983), pp. 173-180.

4. Rob Edelman, "Storyteller of Struggles: An Interview with Haile Gerima," *The Independent*, October 1985, p. 16.

5. In a lecture titled "Frantz Fanon: Our Contemporary Zeitgeist," presented on the occasion of the 25-year anniversary of Fanon's death at the Berlin Technical University on December 6, 1986, I argued for the emergence of African Marxism in the writings of Fanon and Amilcar Cabral. That essay will appear in a forthcoming issue of *Das Argument*, a West German political and philosophical journal.

6. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (London: Penguin Books, 1969), pp. 120-122.

7. *Ibid.*, p.141.

8. For instance, I have not dealt with the contributions of Paulin Vieyra in relation to African cinema and William Greaves in the Afro-American context.

Ntongela Masilela, a black South African independent filmmaker presently residing in exile in West Berlin and member of Fountainhead Dance Theater, just completed two documentary films—on black music and dance—in Poland.

Ntogela Masilela 1988

BODIES AND ANTI-BODIES
A CRISIS IN REPRESENTATION

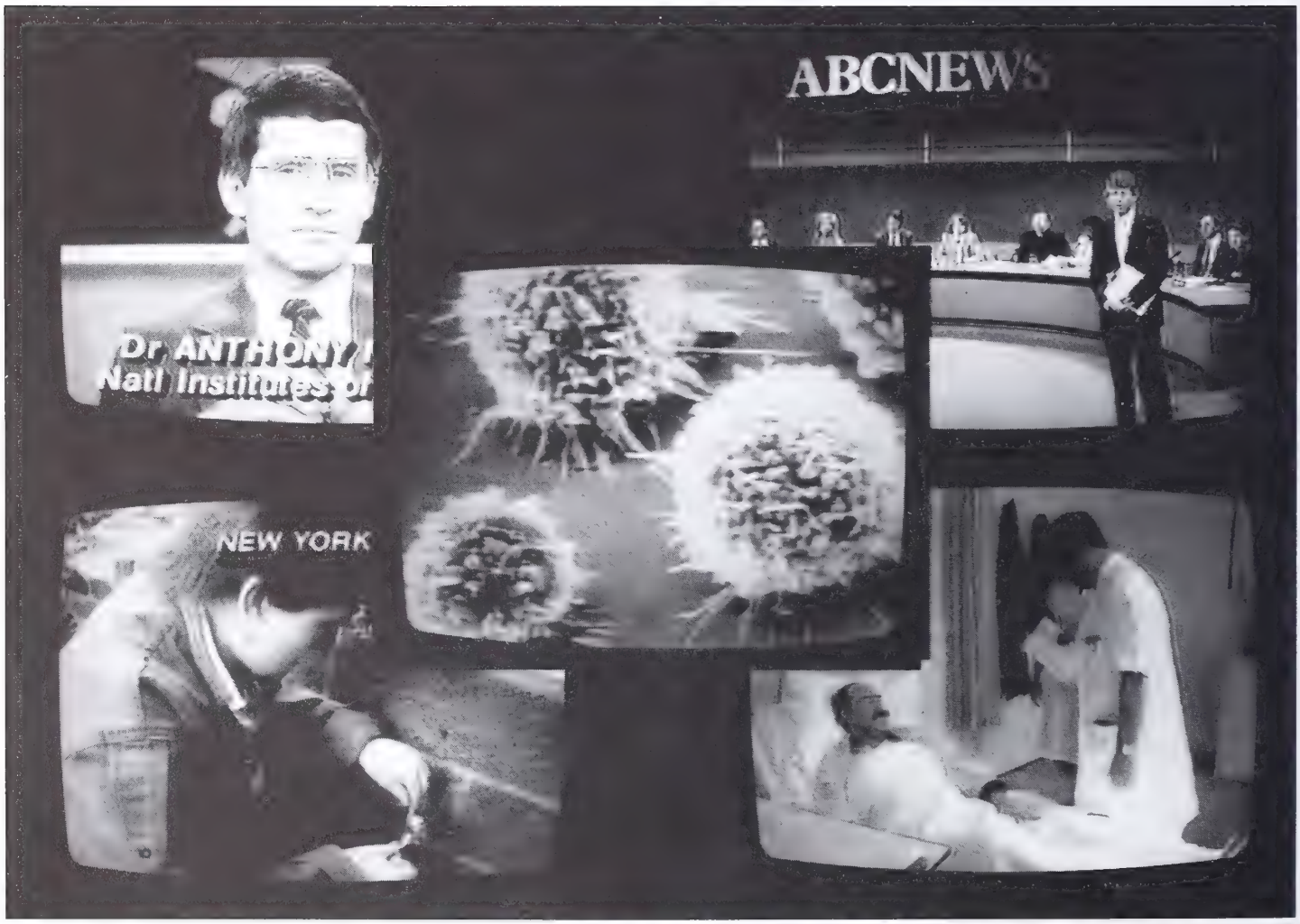
Timothy Landers

Aids is not only a medical crisis on an unparalleled scale, it involves a crisis of representation itself, a crisis over the entire framing of knowledge about the human body and its capacities for sexual pleasure.

—*Simon Watney*
from Policing Desire

Commercial television introduces its AIDS specials by emphasizing the mass media's responsibility for public health and its concern for the welfare of each individual viewer. Presented with the humble intention of "saving your life," these programs promote a contradictory agenda that encourages the consumption of information (and products) through the creation of fear. Tom Brokaw demonstrated this when, in *NBC News National Forum: Life, Death and AIDS* (January 21, 1986), he called AIDS "the plague" while promising to put an end to confusion. Over and over, with dramatic urgency, straight-talking newscasters warn us, "AIDS will kill you if you get it." This earnest approach promises the viewer that this is one story that won't be sugar-coated but, inevitably, it is. Such incitements to panic are followed by soothing reassurances that AIDS is largely confined to others. The *raison d'etre* of the AIDS special is to keep it that way.

One of the shortcomings of commercial television's AIDS coverage lies in its insistence on speaking to one audience—the *you* addressed is presumed to be white, middle-class, heterosexual, and healthy, grouped in cozy, stable families. Those responsible for these television programs completely ignore the possibility that many of those watching may be struggling with AIDS on a more immediate level. In his *CBS News Special* special titled, appropriately enough, *AIDS Hits Home* (October 22, 1986), Dan Rather unwittingly spoke this premise when he blurted out, "The scary reality is that gays are no longer the only ones getting it." Rather and others' skewed notion of "reality" is under attack, and the "home" must be rigorously defended. More ominously, these programs suggest that gays exist outside and against this "reality," their deaths having little consequence.



Opposite: On June 5, 1987, *ABC Nightline* convened a four-hour marathon "Town Meeting" to discuss AIDS, employing almost every clichéd emblem of AIDS now in the mass media lexicon.

Top right: As the number of people diagnosed with AIDS increases, educational videotapes on AIDS aimed at various audiences are proliferating. Above: Two teenagers debate the pros and cons of sex in ODN Productions' *AIDS: Just Say No.*

Bottom right: Anticipating a sexual encounter, a nervous man calls a friend for advice in the Gay Men's Health Crisis' *Chance of a Lifetime.*





The prevailing representations about AIDS indicate that it threatens not only physical bodies and institutional bodies, in particular law and health-care systems, but that it is attacking the immune system of the social order itself. When Science fails—by not developing a cure for AIDS—the scientific explanations of disease and sexuality, similarly constructed and frequently intersecting, are revealed as the precarious fictions that they are. Models of sexuality and disease—and their sites, the mind and the body—are postulated as "normal" or "abnormal" through a series of binary oppositions: masculine/feminine, heterosexual/homosexual, and healthy/ill.

Commercial media representations in general are informed by a variation on the normal/abnormal paradigm—one better suited to a visual medium: that of Bodies/Anti-Bodies. The Body—white, middle-class, and heterosexual—is constructed in contrast to the Other, the Anti-Body (frequently *absent* from representation)—blacks, gay men, lesbians, workers, foreigners, in short, the whole range of groups that threaten straight, white, middle-class values. It is important to note the complex, often paradoxical nature of this model, bisected by class, gender, sexual preference, and other qualifications. For instance, advertisements are structured around a subdivision within the primary category of Body—the "beautiful" (thin) Body vs. the "ugly" (fat) Anti-Body. Applied to the subject of AIDS, oppositions revolve around the nexus of health. The Body is, above all, *healthy*. The Anti-Body becomes, specifically, gay, black, Latino, the IV drug user, the prostitute—in other words, *sick*. Tinged with the stigma of illness that dramatically destroys the body, what was usually absent from representation becomes spectacularly and consistently *visible*.

Mass media images of people with AIDS show isolated, emaciated, hospital-bound, bed-ridden individuals. The message is clear—*AIDS is fatal*. The Anti-Body is consumed, while in advertisements during the commercial breaks the Body consumes. The camera dwells on healthy bodies in these documentaries, with images of people with AIDS acting as punctuation. Healthy, but anxious, Bodies discuss how to avoid AIDS; singles boogie in discos, work-out in mirrored health clubs, and exchange AIDS-era dating tips. "I never sleep with anyone unless I know them first," says one blonde model-type. Another says, "Sex is like playing Russian roulette," a metaphor that has found favor with newscasters in search of the no-nonsense catch-phrase.

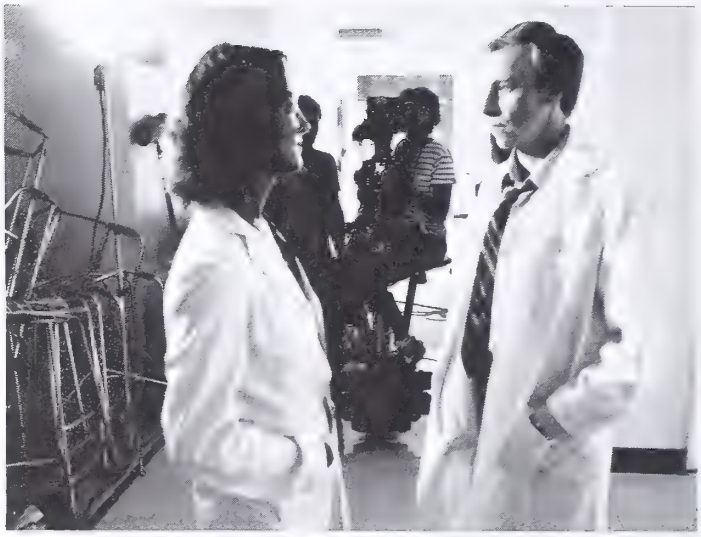
Another common element is stock footage of laboratory science at work—microscopes, test tubes, hardware, etc. An anchorperson often narrates a segment standing in a lab, while a white-coated technician tinkers with test-tubes and impressive machines churn blood in the background, suggesting that Science is perfecting a cure even as we speak. In these sequences, media and science are also wed in dazzling displays of technology, where photographic magnification reveals the HIV virus and electronic manipulation colorizes and animates it.

In addition to the standard lab shot, the conventional intro-to-AIDS documentary contains one or more of the following: an in-studio panel and "experts" from around the world communicating via satellite; interviews with people living with AIDS (PWAs): an IV drug user and gay man vs. a hemophiliac or unsuspecting partner of a bi-sexual man; a scene of drug-users shooting up, usually in a Lower East Side vacant lot; shots of a streetwalker soliciting business (this shot always has a voyeuristic, "hidden camera" look, with the "hooker" often bathed in red light while she saunters up to a car); shots of blood being drawn, illustrating "testing"; shot of two men, often wearing jeans and flannel shirts, walking arm-in-arm down Castro Street to illustrate "homosexual liberation," which we're told, resulted in the "promiscuity" of the seventies that is the source of AIDS; distressed parents picketing schools; and the obligatory singles aerobicizing, dancing, socializing.

The documentary claim to objectivity in these programs—and the structure imposed on this kind of illustrative footage—is founded, once again, in the point/counterpoint treatment of the "issues" that have become synonymous with AIDS: condom advertising, safe-sex education, schooling for children with AIDS, people with AIDS in the workplace, mandatory testing, and quarantine. Given what is known about how AIDS is transmitted, that certain positions should be treated as "controversial," implying that they exist within a rational, moral arena and are, therefore, worthy of debate, legitimates morally and medically questionable solutions under the guise of objectivity and in the name of democracy. In this regard, we're asked to consider the pros and cons of clearly barbarous measures like William F. Buckley's proposal to tattoo people who test positive for HIV, or quarantine laws, now on the books in Louisiana and other states.

ABC Nightline's *AIDS: A National Town Meeting* (June 5, 1987) deserves special notice, not only because it was broadcast live but because it was the Baroque version of the AIDS special—four hours long, with a studio panel of 19 "experts" (more than comparable shows combined),





numerous satellite hook-ups, studio audience participants, phone-in questions from around the nation, and vignettes on topics from "epidemics" to "euthenasia." The title indicates one of mass media's central mythologies: the United States is one big, democratic town, and television provides the democratic forum, a Town Hall where tough issues are grappled with and resolved and where a show of hands is replaced by the results of a nationwide poll. Because of its excesses, and the fact that it was live, and thus open to unpredictability, the program periodically threatened to erupt into chaos. The studio audience repeatedly heckled when Senator Dannemeyer—homophobe extraordinaire—spoke, and some articulate panel members were able to forcefully argue positions more radical than those on Ted Koppel's moderate agenda. For instance, much to Koppel's chagrin playwright Harvey Fierstein stressed that it is risky *behavior*, not "risk groups" or promiscuity, that exposes one to the HIV virus.

The compulsion to give AIDS a "face," to externalize the HIV antibodies characteristic of AIDS by identifying Anti-Bodies, provides the impetus for many mass media representations of PWAs as well as proposals for mandatory testing. The attempt to "humanize" AIDS by presenting the "face of AIDS" offers a justification for this approach that anthropomorphizes the virus and dehumanizes the PWA. The "face" inscribed with the status of its internal fluids becomes a cipher through which a dreaded disease speaks its ugly truth. *AIDS: A Public Inquiry* (March 25,1987), an hour-long documentary produced by WGBH-Boston and aired on the Public Broadcasting Service's *Frontline* series, is obsessed with identifying the enemy and demonstrates the insidious underside of the "face of AIDS" mentality. The program starts out fairly typically: Judy Woodruff gives the "facts" about AIDS, backed up with statistics made easy-to-understand by playful computer graphics. The panel of experts is introduced, carefully balanced with doctors, representatives from gay organizations, and right-wing ideologues. The stage is set for one of the most irresponsible representations of AIDS aired in this country.

"This is a portrait," Woodruff announces, "of a man with AIDS who continued to have unsafe sex." In this way she introduces the centerpiece of the show, Fabian Bridges. Bridges is "not typical" we are told, in an attempt at reassurance. He is gay, black, poor, and not particularly alert or articulate. The characteristics of AIDS—lethargy, confusion and incoherence—become his personal attributes and not the result of the HIV virus, although, as some critics have pointed out, it's likely that Bridges was in the early stages of dementia, a physical result of the HIV virus' attack on the brain. The camera crew, Woodruff then explains, follows him on "his tragic journey across the U.S.A."

Bridges is encountered in *medias res*, having been diagnosed, hospitalized, and released. Rejected by his family, without insurance or a job, he begins to wander. Since the filmmakers discovered Bridges through a newspaper item, they must first track him down. So the story begins with his absence—we see an empty hospital bed, a vacant phone booth indicates calls for help made to his family. And his absence indicates the threat his presence represents to "the nation"; if he is not on camera, he must be out there, somewhere, spreading the HIV virus. Television, then, becomes the vortex of the storm, and its inability to contain the agent of destruction foretells the chaos that lies just outside the screen's perimeters. By casting the central character in this way, the documentary leads to an inevitable conclusion: quarantine, the only way to solve the acute anxiety that Bridges represents.

While Bridges is found, then lost, then found again by the crew, the situation grows more urgent. As an example of impartial reporting, the *Frontline* crew is a model of disaster, giving Bridges money, doing his laundry, and ultimately reporting him to health officials. Thus public officials are made aware of the threat, the walking AIDS virus, a modern-day Typhoid Mary. Along with shots of Bridges wandering aimlessly and confessing to the camera that he has, as we are led to suspect, had unsafe sex because he "just doesn't care" is footage of police and government officials who voice their frustration with Bridges' right to be assumed innocent before proven guilty. There is no doubt in *AIDS: A Public Inquiry* that Bridges is guilty. Legal and ethical problems posed by his situation are trivialized and individual rights and democratic processes are depicted as a paralyzed and ineffective bureaucratic circus that leaves the public vulnerable to a deadly threat.

The Body/Anti-Body split prevalent in the conceptualization of AIDS operates on a series of already formulated definitions. In the first volume of his *History of Sexuality* (New York: Randon House, 1978), Michel Foucault discusses the ideological mechanisms that allow an act capable of being committed by any body—sodomy—to become firmly anchored to a specific Body—the "homosexual." And, in *AIDS in the Mind of America: The Social, Political and Psychological Impact of an Epidemic* (New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1986), Dennis Altman notes, "[T]he fact that the first reported cases [of AIDS] were among gay men was to effect the entire future conceptualization of AIDS." Others have also pointed out that the extant discourse on homosexuality provides the shape, the invisible framework, the explanation-by-association for AIDS.* It is the reigning idea of "homosexuality" that is never represented but upon which many representations of AIDS rely.

Because the gay man has been established as the icon for AIDS, it is

* See, in addition to the sources cited, Alan Brandt, "AIDS: From Social History to Social Policy," in *Law, Medicine and Health Care*, Vol.14, Nos. 15-16 (December 1986), pp. 231-241.

Far left: Members of the Theater Rhinoceros cast of *The AIDS Show* in Rob Epstein and Peter Adair's documentary of the same title.
Courtesy Direct Cinema

Left: A conversation between two doctors on theories of symptom identification introduces Stuart Marshall's videotape *Bright Eyes*.
Courtesy videomaker

Right: The central character in Marc Huestis and Wendy Dallas' docu-bio *Chuck Solomon: Coming of Age* with his mother.
Courtesy filmmakers



important to see how this conflation of disease and desire informs conceptualizations and descriptions of AIDS, particularly through the panic-inducing theory of casual transmission. A chapter in Simon Watney's *Policing Desire: Pornography, AIDS and the Media* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), entitled "Infectious Desires" illustrates some of the contradictions that the figure of "the homosexual" embodies. He cites a school textbook from the 1960s that provides a revealing "contagion/seduction" model of homosexuality:

> The greatest danger in homosexuality lies in the introduction of normal people to it. An act which will produce nothing but disgust in a normal individual may quite easily become more acceptable until the time arrives when the normal person by full acceptance of the abnormal act becomes a pervert too.

Homosexuality, this statement implies, is a contagious "disease," transmitted casually and capable of breaking down individual will-power, resulting in its spread through the "normal" population. This suggests that will-power must unrelentingly police the boundaries of desire, locating homosexuality within, as well as outside, the individual.*

As anyone who pays even minimal attention to mass media knows, this model structures AIDS as well as "homosexuality." At work, then, is an analogy of the immune system with will-power; both become barriers against "abnormality." When AIDS is thus conflated with homosexuality, some of the imagined properties of "homosexuality" are grafted onto AIDS, despite all evidence to the contrary. The logical outcome of this conceptual system is an innocent/guilty dichotomy of "victims"—both the "victims" who succumb to homosexuality and the "victims" of AIDS. The "normal" person who, through a combination of seduction (breakdown of will-power) and contagion becomes abnormal is both "innocent victim" (previously "normal") and "guilty victim" (who allowed him- or herself to catch it). In the case of AIDS, there are sharp divisions conforming to these innocent/guilty categories, with children, hemophiliacs, female partners of bisexual men occupying the former and gay men, IV drug users, prostitutes, Haitians occupying the latter. However, it is important to note that all are guilty of being "victims," a stigma which, according to the prevailing interrelated mythologies of strength of will, and rugged individualism, could be prevented.

In *Illness as Metaphor* (New York: Vintage Books, 1977) Susan Sontag quotes Karl Menninger in her discussion of how illness is blamed on the victim and how certain illnesses (in this case, cancer and tuberculosis) are formulated:

> Illness is in part what the world has done to a victim, but in a larger part it is what the victim has done with his world, and with himself.... Illness is interpreted as, basically, a psychological event, and people are encouraged to believe that they get sick because they (unconsciously) want to, and that they can cure themselves by the mobilization of will; that they can chose not to die of the disease.

Similarly, homosexuality can not only be prevented but "cured" through self-discipline, a mobilization of the will. In their 1987 pamphlet *What Homosexuals Do (It's More than Merely Disgusting)* the right-wing Family Research Institute echoes a sentiment common to more respectable institutions like the Catholic Church:

> Those who would recognize homosexuality as a legitimate lifestyle are being manifestly unkind because they refuse hope and motivation to those homosexually involved and are adding to the sexual difficulties of our civilization. Homosexuals should be encouraged to abandon their unfortunate habit as millions have before them.

Just as safe sex education is seen as encouraging homosexuality (or sexuality in general), so, too, dispensing clean needles to IV drug users is seen as encouraging drug use. Both homosexuality and drug use, threatening in the potential pleasures they represent, are defined as unhealthy, counter to the "natural" state of the body. In recent years, this threat has been countered with the strident campaigns to "Just say no"—to drugs and sex. When AIDS became worthy of presidential attention (i.e., when it became acknowledged that white, middle-class heterosexuals were susceptible), "Just say no" to sex was added to the "Just say no" to drugs slogan, in an effort to mobilize, once again, the all-American virtue of individual initiative. The frightfully similar policies devised in conjunction with both campaigns—the testing of bodily fluids—marks the contradiction at the heart of New Right thinking: the rhetoric of a meritocratic social and economic system that stresses individualism while concealing an agenda of state intervention, control, and surveillance of morality.

AIDS: Just Say No (1987) is, appropriately enough, the title for an educational videotape produced for the New York City public schools and distributed across the country. As the most innocent victims in a cruel world, the children's bodies have been the frequent sites for media exploitation—on subjects like child abuse, incest, kiddie porn, child molestation, alcohol, drugs, sex, and so on. Community decisions to educate children and teenagers about AIDS are accompanied by much hand-wringing and eulogizing of lost innocence. Commissioned by the New York City Board of Education to produce an educational film on AIDS, ODN Productions, a nonprofit educational media production company, became aware of this as they watched their first effort, *Sex, Drugs, and AIDS* (1986), sit on the shelf for six months. At the request of the Board of Education, ODN revised the tape to emphasize abstinence rather than safer sex. The result, *AIDS: Just Say No*, was subsequently approved and put in circulation. The difference

* The recent amendment to the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriation Bill (which provides close to a billion dollars for AIDS research and funding), sponsored by Senator Jesse Helms, prohibits use of federal funds for any AIDS education or information materials that "promote or encourage, directly or indirectly, homosexual activities." Despite the proven success of safe sex education materials among gay men, the Senate voted 94 to two in favor of this amendment, indicating the degree to which the "casual transmission" concept of homosexuality operates among liberals as well as conservatives and that they are more concerned with preventing the "spread" of homosexuality than the HIV virus.



Todd Coleman, the subject of Tina DeFeliciantonio's *Living with AIDS*, receives a massage from a volunteer, one of several whose contributions to Coleman's daily life are profiled in the documentary.

Courtesy filmmaker

between the two tapes is minimal. *Sex, Drugs, and AIDS* features three white teenage girls stretching in a ballet studio and chatting about birth control, sexually transmitted diseases, and AIDS, reaching the conclusion that condoms are a preferred method of prevention. *AIDS: Just Say No* substitutes a school staircase for the ballet barre. In this version, only one of the girls has had sex, the other two state that they're waiting, but the girl who is having sex doesn't apologize and has a mature, responsible attitude as well as an impressive understanding of birth control, AIDS, and STDs.

Both ODN videos start off with an MTV-like bang, with a disco beat pacing the montage of images that illustrate ways you *cannot* get AIDS (door knobs, swimming pools, shared glasses, etc.) that effectively eases most fears about casual transmission. However, both videotapes run into problems in the discussion of the ways you *can* get AIDS. The "host," Rae Dawn Chong, fidgets noticeably when she has to say the words "anal sex." One wonders why a retake wasn't ordered, or if her body language is meant to be a signifier of disapproval, permissible even within a climate of tolerance. Not surprisingly, the video never acknowledges or addresses gay or lesbian kids. Instead "homosexuality" is mediated through a straight man. "I still dunno why guys wanna sleep wit oda guys," says the big lug with a heart of gold who has just told the story of how he hated "fags" until he realized his brother, who died of AIDS, was one. This featured character utters a meek cry for tolerance and a thunderous roar for maintaining gender roles and rigid sexual identities, all the while congratulating himself for his "sensitivity."

Whether stretching in ballet class or just rapping in the hallways of USA High, the kids in *Sex, Drugs, and AIDS/AIDS: Just Say No* are considerably hipper than the squares, who sit docilely behind their desks, hands folded, faces scrubbed, and embarrassingly overdressed for what appears to be just another biology class in *The AIDS Movie* (1986), another educational video designed for high school students. This tape has the look of *Sixty Minutes* but comes across like one of those outdated hygiene films that evoke so much eyeball rolling and giggles among today's image-sophisticated kids. A lecture on AIDS provides the structure, interspersed with testimony from PWAs who describe their illnesses and make "don't end up like me" pleas. In contrast, the verite look used by ODN cleverly presents information in a nonauthoritarian manner, and Chong's rap appeals to kids who will trust an admired peer—and celebrity—more than a stodgy biology teacher. Still, *AIDS: Just Say No*'s appeal, its savvy use of commercial television's language, also presents its essential problem: the conventional representation of black and Latino teenagers and reinforcement of homophobia. In addition, the kids talk to one another with all the friendly, spontaneous intimacy of TV sit-coms and tampon commercials, employing the mass media's style that claims to reflect real life. Praised widely for speaking to kids "in their own language," *AIDS: Just Say No* does no such thing. Rather, by speaking to the commercially defined notion of "kids," this tape denies participation of actual children and teenagers in the representation of their sexualities.

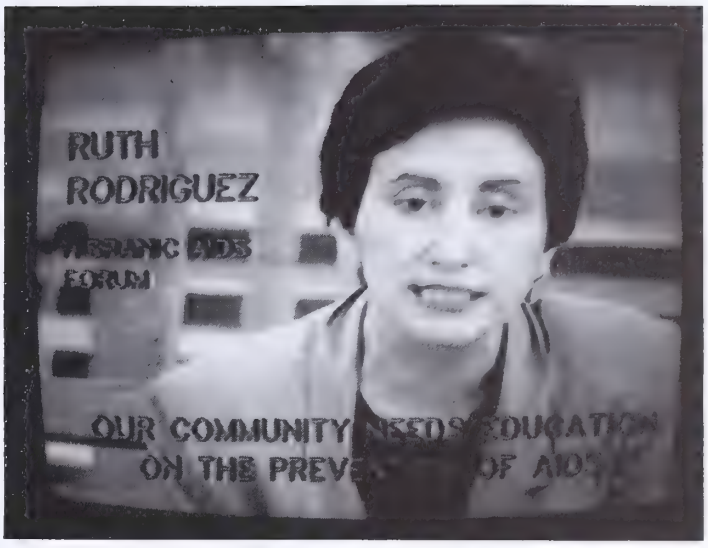
Though it is, in fact, educational, the Gay Men's Health Crisis' *Chance of a Lifetime* (1986) would never be approved by the Board of Education—or, probably, by any government agency. An enthusiastic "yes" to (gay men's) sex, this videotape is a curious blend of instruction, pornography, and romantic fantasy, all marshalled to eroticize and encourage safer sex practices. Structured like conventional porn, *Chance of a Lifetime* inserts safe-sex talk into scenes of pre-sex chit-chat and safe sex demonstrations into the sex scenes, blurring these categories and stressing fantasy and foreplay over the exchange of body fluids. Couples romantically involved get it on and so do strangers, with an emphasis on eliminating risk behavior, not dictating moral standards, and the tape wisely avoids confusing safer sex with monogamy. While suggestive of post-AIDS pleasures, *Chance of a Lifetime* seems a little confused about exactly what these are, but, then, the list of "safe," "possibly safe," and "unsafe" activities has only recently been generally agreed upon.

The tape is most successful when it acknowledges the difficulty of adapting to safe sex and to what videomaker John Greyson has wittily named ADS: the Acquired Dread of Sex.* In one sequence, a man repeatedly interrupts his dinner with a hot date to telephone a friend who allays his escalating fears. The friend, who appears superimposed on the screen in a little box, outlines safe-sex practices and tells him there is no reason he can't have sex. *Chance of a Lifetime* should also be commended for refusing to address only the worried well. In the third vignette, a man who has tested positive for the HIV virus has safer sex with his lover in a radical representation and refusal of Anti-Body status. One of the only educational videotapes on AIDS interested in salvaging sex, *Chance of a Lifetime* is, however, too ambiguous to be a lesson-plan and at the same time unable to generate the raw heat of a good porno flick. Nonetheless, it suggests the areas that need exploration and the pleasures that need redefinition.

When Michael Lumpkin, director of the tenth San Fransisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, was asked about the festival's films on AIDS, he replied that they were " a pleasure," adding, "Many of them show ways the crisis is changing people for the better." Along the same lines, the *San Fransisco Chronicle* , in a review of *The AIDS Show*, said, "In the end it poses the only 'solution' [to AIDS] available: to persevere and endure through our own best resources of humanity and humaneness." A welcome antidote to the homophobic products of network television, including *Frontline*'s *AIDS: A Public Inquiry*, the response of independent film- and videomakers has not exactly been to paste a happy face over the AIDS crisis, but much of what has been produced so far does tend to depoliticize it by concentrating on the death and suffering that often accompanies AIDS.

The AIDS Show: Artists Involved with Death and Survival (1986), by Peter Adair and Robert Epstein; *Living with AIDS* (1986), produced and directed by Tina DiFeliciantonio; *Hero of My Own Life* (1986), produced by Tom Brook; and Mark Heustis and Wendy Dallas' *Chuck Solomon: Coming of Age* (1986), are, in various degrees, informed by an appealing but still

* In his new, humorous five-minute videotape, *The ADS Epidemic*, Greyson produces a condensed parody of *Death in Venice* and a send up of the kinds of public service announcements about AIDS that encourage sexual abstinence.



The political dimension of AIDS is the theme of the collectively-produced videotape *Testing the Limits*, which includes statements by a number of representatives of grassroots AIDS organizations.

problematic "humaneness." The latter three view AIDS through the prism of individual experience by focusing on individuals with AIDS: Todd Coleman, David Summers, and Chuck Solomon respectively. Scenes of daily life are intercut with the reminiscences and testimonies of friends, lovers, and health care workers. Each provides a mini-bio: coming out as a gay man, family rejection and/or acceptance, and insights gained from being close to death. In *Living with AIDS*, Coleman's poor health is evident, and his daily routine centers on the prosaic efforts of staying alive. Summers and Solomon are shown as active men in reasonably good health, although both discuss the on-going battle with various illnesses that they have experienced as a result of their weakened immune systems. Each of the three men is depicted surrounded by lovers, friends, family, and elaborate networks of volunteers from gay and lesbian community organizations.

Living with AIDS, however, presents the most sensitive relationship between the individual and his community, perhaps because the 22-year-old Coleman is not as financially well-off or socially established as Solomon and Summers and, therefore, more dependent on community services. In one eloquent scene a volunteer masseur pays a call, and the viewer realizes that many PWAs are often denied human touch. Coleman is also shown attending the annual Gay and Lesbian Freedom March with his lover, and this, along with footage of an AIDS candlelight vigil, somewhat diffuses the emphasis on personal heroism. In *Hero of My Own Life* Summers also stresses his reliance on a network of support groups, but his story is told in a more autobiographical fashion, as is Solomon's. Solomon's personal history as a playwright in the sixties (*Crimes against Nature*) and a participant in the struggles for gay and lesbian rights is inextricably bound to that of the gay and lesbian rights movement. He links events in his own life to community events, such as the Stonewall rebellion in 1969. A number of sequences in the film take place at his fortieth birthday party, where friends and family gather to say farewell and celebrate a life well-lived, rendering a powerful representation of individual and collective strength and courage dramatically counter to those of commercial media.

Unfortunately, because these documentaries are so relentlessly biographical, they can only be as informative and engaging as the people they spotlight. Treating AIDS as a personal crisis still situates the struggle against it in the individual. And the reinvestment of the Anti-Body with subjectivity—individuality, emotions, a biography—tends to participate in cultural mythologies of individual heroism that also sustain the "Just say no" campaigns, locating complex social and political issues within the self. The flip-side of blaming the individual is to celebrate him/her for "battling" the particular problem. I don't mean to say that there aren't heroes or diminish the psychological factors of illness, and I especially do not mean to trivialize the personal struggles of people with AIDS and those lovers, friends, family, and volunteers that struggle with them. These videotapes and films are effective in eliciting a sympathetic identification with the main character, an admiration for the courage, humor, and determination exhibited, and a sense of inspiration. But, by using AIDS as a dramatic catalyst in a familiar format of heightened emotion saturated with the rhetoric of personal heroism, these videotapes tend to overlook the specifics of AIDS. A narration in *The AIDS Show* reinforces this: "Whenever a catastrophe hits, be it a flood, an earthquake, a plague, initial reaction is to ask, Why here? Why us? Often we blame ourselves for a loss that is arbitrary."

Steven Winn, writing in the *San Fransisco Chronicle*, began his review of *The AIDS Show*, by calling it a "funny, tender, at times angry—and ultimately human—documentary." Although *The AIDS Show* doesn't center on one individual, the tape does, however, concentrate on individual responses through a series of skits from the San Francisco Theater Rhinoceros company's production of the same name, along with commentaries by the cast and crew of the show. Well-written and skillfully presented, the skits are effective in easing feelings of isolation and despair through humor and knowledge. Because the original show was presented in 1984, the tape is most informative when it contrasts some of the earlier skits with those from an updated, 1985 version, *Unfinished Business: The New AIDS Show*. In the 1984 edition, four men at a pajama party discuss safe sex while playing Trivial Pursuit. One man announces he's had hot sex in a jeep the night before. His friend teases, "I thought you were Sally Safe-Sex!" "We had the emergency brake on" is his friend's campy reply. *Unfinished Business* has a different tone: the same group holds a pajama party reunion, but now one of them has AIDS. Safe sex is no longer a joke but *de rigeur*. "You can still have a good time without exchanging bodily fluids," announces one character as a segue into safe sex information. The campy humor is still there but AIDS has become a long-term concern.

Like the first segment of *Chance of a Lifetime*, *The AIDS Show* adroitly mixes safe sex information with entertainment, using humor to diffuse the uncertainty, frustration, and anxiety that accompany sex in the age of AIDS. Since part of the project, director Leland Moss explains, was to leave audiences "more knowledgeable and less frightened about AIDS," many of the pieces are similarly didactic, although a number concentrate on emotional education rather than health information. Two of the most moving sequences are monologues about personal loss. One man speaks to his deceased lover, and another speaks to the audience about his friend, Jeffery, who died of AIDS: "In this land of free speech the dying are supposed to go quietly for the sake of the living. Well, Jeffery shattered the myth of the dignified death. He was pissed off and he didn't care who knew. He said, 'Fuck *Death Be Not Proud* and *Love Story* and *Brian's Song* and *Marcus Welby* and *Bang the Drum Slowly*....' He had this voracious self-pity that's usually reserved for home owners who've lost their belongings in mudslides." While *The AIDS Show* is too smart to fall into crass sentimentality, it does bear certain resemblances to the litany of heroic death films that this monologue parodies.

The immediate response to AIDS has been fear, anger, despair, and self-blame. To put AIDS in the same category as natural disasters, however, ignores the specific ways in which AIDS has developed and been conceptualized, the way gay men have been blamed for it, the way it has been cast as a "gay disease," the ways that the government has not responded while stalling drug testing and refusing to restructure an inadequate health-care system. AIDS does indeed highlight the peculiar ways in which our culture choses to pretend death doesn't exist, leaving us without a framework for understanding and accepting loss. *The AIDS Show* provides a community for mourning and articulates a stubborn refusal to retreat into the closet. What it does not provide is a community for organized response to the ways



The recent videotape *Testing the Limits* features scenes from various public political protests by the outspoken New York City group AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power—ACT UP.

in which AIDS is an eminently *preventable* cause of death and the ways in which people *living* with AIDS are not being cured or cared for.

Bright Eyes (1984), produced in Great Britain by Moral Panic productions and directed by Stuart Marshall, acknowledges the importance of individual activism while refusing to participate in the cult of the individual hero. Its last sequence consists of interviews with individuals working with a variety of gay and lesbian organizations who speak about a number of interrelated topics—AIDS, police harassment and entrapment of gay men for "soliciting," and censorship. The interviews have a staged quality, as if they'd been rehearsed or scripted. Previously, in diverse dramatic scenes, an ensemble of actors recite their lines in deadpan fashion. This blurring of the "real" and the "acted" not only blocks emotional identification but resituates struggle outside the individual in political-historical terrain. Furthermore, this method and structure alert the viewer to the problems of representation within documentary formats—a carefully constructed, acted out, acted upon narrative with questionable claims to "objectivity."

The first part of the tape examines the construction of Anti-Bodies by nineteenth-century science, aided by a newly discovered tool—the camera. In the opening scene a doctor explains to a colleague, "Sometimes a symptom is invisible, and we need to hunt it out quite aggressively. Sometimes a symptom is visible, and we just don't see it. I imagine that is what is meant by the expression, 'It was right before my eyes.'" The need to see symptoms, to categorize and label people "normal" or "abnormal," characterizes the project of science in the latter half of the nineteenth-century. The camera, thought to have "no preconceived notions" and presenting things to us "as they are," became an accomplice in this project which was, according to Marshall, to "identify and isolate social groups and describe them as being inherently ill." Photographs that might appear innocuous become powerful condemnations when accompanied by the captions "Hysteric," "Intermediate Type," "Moral Imbecile," "Homosexual."

The need for systems of visual identification led to theories that posited an anatomical relation between violent criminals, sexual offenders, and skeletal structures. Sexual offenders, in addition to "swollen eyelids and lips," usually had "bright eyes," according to one theory of physiognomy. Using photographs from contemporary British tabloids, Marshall reveals how such representations of disease and deviance have informed the AIDS crisis. One headline, "Pictures That Reveal Disturbing Truths About AIDS Sickness" contrasts a picture of a handsome, smiling gay man "before" with one taken of his face swollen and disfigured "after" AIDS. *Bright Eyes*' second part details some of the methods used by the Nazis to persecute gay men. In one dramatic scene a young man is accused of homosexuality on the basis of a single piece of "evidence," a snapshot of him and a school chum. The processes of identifying and isolating Anti-Bodies, so crucial to the Nazi project of racial purity, are revealed to be remarkably similar to those proposed today by U.S. governmental officials, public health officials, and presidential candidates as a "solution" to AIDS.

Another video documentary, *Testing the Limits* (1987), like *Bright Eyes*, realizes that the battle against AIDS occurs in a political arena. Unlike *Bright Eyes*, though, this tape stirs emotions, although not by eliciting the emotional catharses of *The AIDS Show* or *Coming of Age* but by effecting emotional identification in shared outrage. Produced by Testing the Limits Collective members Greg Bordowitz, Sandra Elgear, Robyn Hutt, Hilery Kipnis, and David Meieran in New York City "to document emerging forms of activism that are arising out of people's responses to government inaction regarding the global epidemic of AIDS," the program consists of interviews with people working in various AIDS organizations—the Hispanic AIDS Forum, the National AIDS Network, the Minority Task Force on AIDS, the Institute for the Protection of Gay and Lesbian Youth, among others—edited together with scenes from various AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) protests, excerpts from lectures delivered at the June 1987 *Village Voice* AIDS Teach-In, and a few safe-sex tips.

Testing the Limits uses the style of commercial media—skillful camerawork and editing, a catchy soundtrack—without becoming reductive or reinforcing the ideological assumptions that this style can mask. Covering the period from March to August 1987 and located specifically in New York City, the tape not only gives voice to all those generally silenced by commercial media—minority groups, gays, lesbians, PWAs, drug users—but also *addresses* them. Ruth Rodriguez of the Hispanic AIDS Forum speaks to the Latino community in Spanish, while Barry Gingell, a doctor and a PWA, provides information on potentially useful drugs. Community Health Project nurse Denise Ribble's safe sex tips are the most imaginative and direct I've seen so far. Throughout, analysis meets activism, as when Mitchell Karp of the New York City Commission on Human Rights observes, "Testing deflects from the real issues which are a modification of behavior and protection of civil rights," followed by protesters shouting, "Test drugs, not people."

Now, years after AIDS began striking gay men, AIDS is a hot topic. From daily stories in newspapers and magazines to after-school specials, movies of the week, nightly news bulletins, scores of new works by independent film- and videomakers, and educational videos targeted at every conceivable audience, there has been a proliferation of information and disinformation on AIDS. It is important to recognize the ways in which commercial media and its spin-offs refuse to recognize AIDS as anything other than a medical crisis threatening the heterosexual, white, middle class or a drama of personal struggle in the face of death, not only providing limited information but limiting the potential for the social changes that this crisis so dramatically calls for. As Phil Reed, from the Minority Task Force on AIDS, said at a protest in *Testing the Limits*, AIDS will "either kill us or politicize us."

The author thanks Jean Carlomusto and Lee Quinby for assistance in researching this article and Carlos Espinoza for the loan of his VCR.

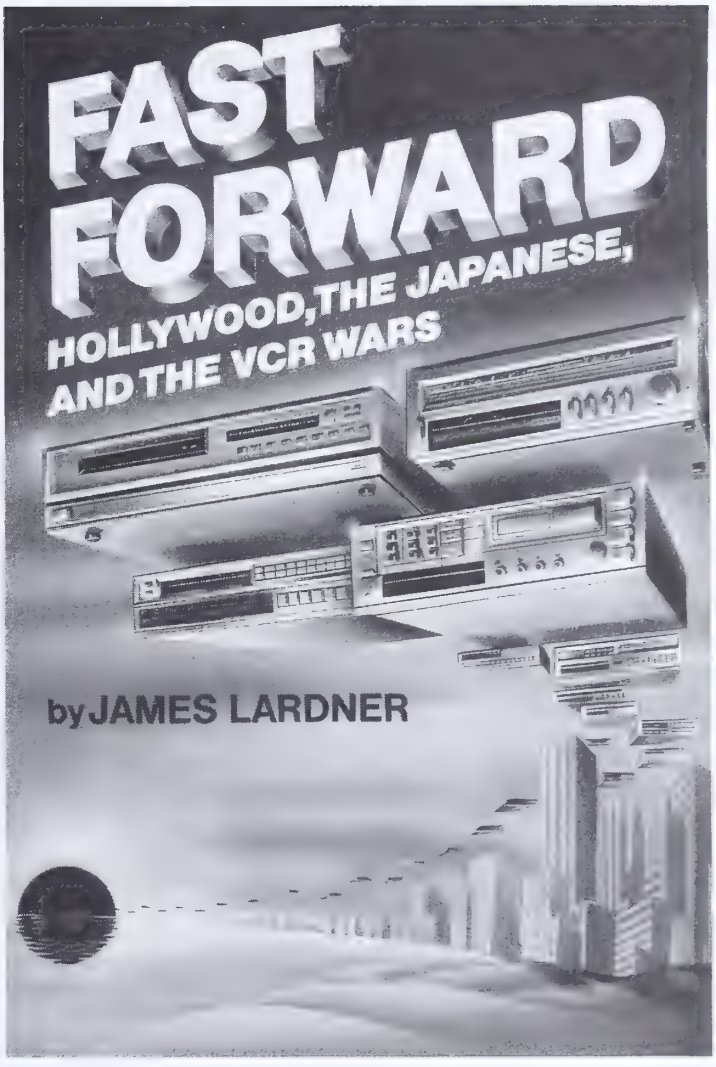
Timothy Landers is a freelance media critic living in New York City.

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HARDWARE WARS

Fast Forward:
Hollywood, the Japanese, and the Onslaught of the VCR
by James Lardner
New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1987,
344 pp., $18.95 (cloth)

Eric Breitbart



It's hard to believe that a little more than 10 years ago VCRs cost $2,300 and were as scarce as Kiwi fruit. How this seemingly innocuous piece of electronic hardware became the hottest-selling consumer item of the 1980s and the center of one of the longest (and most expensive) lawsuits in recent history is the subject of James Lardner's engrossing book, *Fast Forward*. Lardner, a *New Yorker* staff writer, has a novelist's gift for detail and structure that enables him to shape a tangle of legal, technical, and journalistic information into a fast-paced narrative. While the story of the VCR lacks the sex and sleaze of books like *Final Cut* and *Indecent Exposure*, it does have a compelling cast of characters—Akio Morita, the chairman of Sony; Jack Valenti, head of the Motion Picture Association of America; Sidney Sheinberg, president of Universal Pictures; Dean Dunlavey, head of Sony's legal team; and a shifting chorus of legislators, lobbyists, and interested parties—and an importance reaching far beyond the boardrooms of Tokyo and Los Angeles.

In the age of "promiscuous publication" (a phrase of Senator Charles Mathias), the VCR has done a lot more than sell machines and videocassettes; it has changed the whole nature of intellectual property and copyright in ways that have yet to be felt. To Lardner's credit, he lays out the ramifications of the VCR story in the words and actions of the participants—he conducted over 200 interviews—so that certain conclusions are unavoidable, but he doesn't beat you over the head with them. Some of it is funny; other parts of the story may make you want to retch. Particularly repugnant is the chapter on the massive lobbying effort of both Hollywood and the electronics industry to influence Congress and the White House in 1983-84, a campaign described by one congressional aide as "corporate pigs versus corporate pigs." The spectacle of movie studios and the Home Recorders Association trying to hire Senator Paul Laxalt's daughter and brother—both Washington lobbyists—or former commissioners and aides is checkbook democracy at its worst.

Lardner begins the story in September 1976 in the office of Sidney Sheinberg, the president of Universal Pictures and MCA. Sheinberg is reading a draft advertisement for a new product from Sony—the Betamax—which will permit viewers to tape a show off the air while watching another (the term "time-shifting" had not entered the language). A warning bell goes off in Sheinberg's head, and, from there, the story goes forward (to the growth of the home video industry, the brutal competition between VHS and Beta formats, the various court battles) and backwards (the rise of Sony after WWII, the role of copyright in the early days of the movie business), but never fails to be entertaining and informative. One reason is Lardner's way with words, whether he's discussing the mechanics of azimuth recording, relating a comment of the inimitable Jack Valenti, or just telling how you go from point A to point B. In a chapter on Andre Blay, one of the pioneers of home video, he writes: "To get from downtown Hollywood to the birthplace of the prerecorded videocassette business, you head east on the Pomona Freeway for about two thousand miles or so until you come to Farmington Hills, Michigan. Farmington Hills is a suburb of Detroit, and in the fall of 1976 a person had to be about that far from Hollywood to believe that the VCR and the movie industry could be something other than mortal enemies—and to be ready to put his money where his mouth was." Or, on the reaction of the movie studios after the Supreme Court decision favoring Sony: "Showing the same good judgement as the Argentinian generals who decided to put off the reconquest of the Falklands after their defeat by the British, Hollywood's generals agreed that 1984 was going to be a bad year for the pursuit of a home taping royalty."

Fast Forward should be of particular interest to independent filmmakers for two reasons. First, the VCR has changed the nature of the film and video business (and the concept of copyright) for independents as well as the big studios, and it behooves us to understand those changes. Second, the way Lardner has structured his material, dramatizing the mundane, and loosely tying together the disparate threads of his story, is something we could learn from. So far, the book has not been made into a videocassette, so it will have to be read in the SP mode.

Eric Breitbart is an independent producer and freelance writer.

PACIFIC PANORAMAS: "EASTERN HORIZONS" AT THE TORONTO FESTIVAL OF FESTIVALS



Chinese miners in a scene from Hou Hsiao Hsien's autobiographical film *Dust in the Wind*, screened at the Festival of Festivals.

Barbara Scharres

Philippine director Lino Brocka stands at the microphone in a sold-out theater at Toronto's Festival of Festivals to introduce his 1979 film *Mother, Sister, Daughter*. The tumultuous applause makes it clear that he is an old friend—this audience would be here whether the film were completed eight years ago or yesterday. Brocka is known to Filipinos the world over as the director of such popular films imbued in the social struggle of the Philippines as *Jaguar*, *Bona*, and *Bayan Ko*. He is also revered as a political activist whose reputation in some circles just about equals saint-hood. Although as unknown to most of North American audiences as almost all third world film directors, one glance around this Toronto theater reveals that there are as many white Anglos here anxious to see Brocka and his work as there are Filipinos.

This popular reception is necessarily a rare one for an Asian film and an Asian director in North America, except in the case of those who might be called the "brand names" of Asian cinema—directors like Akira Kurosawa and Satyajit Ray. That an ethnically diverse audience could in time come to respond to a Lino Brocka as if he were one of the best known names from Hollywood is exactly what programmer David Overbey had in mind when he assembled the 39-film program "Eastern Horizons" for the Festival of Festivals. It is the reason that Overbey has introduced Asian films to the Toronto audience in increasing numbers, culminating in this year's massive event.

The films selected for "Eastern Horizons" represented Taiwan, Hong Kong, Korea, the Philippines, and Vietnam. Unlike much other festival fare, these films were not examples of independent, alternative, or "art" cinema in their homelands, for no such thing exists. Rather, they are the products of the popular cinema of each nation, a cinema in which familiar genres are very much alive and in which there is almost no trace of the self-parody and reflexiveness found in western films. These were gangster films, comedies, melodramas, and ghost stories, directed for the most part by proven box office champions and featuring the superstars of their respective countries. The variety and incredible vitality of the films made "Eastern Horizons" an unqualified success in terms of attracting publicity and large audiences, especially drawing from Toronto's sizeable Chinese, Korean, and Filipino communities. However, this event's particular success consisted in attracting non-Asian film goers to Asian films in unprecedented numbers and calls into question some of the practices and preconceptions surrounding the exhibition of Asian films, not only in North America, but in the western world in general.

Aside from urging the Festival of Festivals toward a major commitment to Asian cinema, David Overbey has for years been involved in

other efforts to make wider distribution and exhibition of Asian films in the west possible, both in North America and in Europe. Distribution of these films is almost nonexistent and exhibition is limited to specialty venues. Films from Hong Kong and Taiwan are regularly shown in the Chinese theaters of major cities, but these seldom draw patrons from outside their immediate communities, nor do they make the attempt, although prints are often subtitled in English. By the same token, many members of the Asian-American audience do not seek films outside their own communities. The Festival of Festivals developed a crossover audience in both directions this year as a result of "Eastern Horizons," achieving for the first time a noticeable racial and ethnic mix in festival audiences across the board. Overbey has hopes that the trend could have some staying power and that, for instance, Anglo patrons start trickling into some of Toronto's eight Chinese theaters, their appetites whetted by their festival experiences with films like *A Better Tomorrow* or the hilarious *Peking Opera Blues*.

In addition to festivals, museums and art centers are the other North American non-Asian exhibitors of Asian films—venues in which films are rarely screened more than once or twice and have less opportunity to build an audience through publicity and word-of-mouth. Almost all films from Korea, the Philippines, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Vietnam do not have American or European distributors, and it would not seem that they will show up at art house theaters in the foreseeable future, no matter how well received they are by festival audiences.

David Overbey gives some background on this dilemma:

> Some years ago I went around to all the distributors I know, and I know a lot of them, and suggested that I put together 10 to 12 Asian films—Filipino, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Thai—and that they buy this package for less than it would cost to buy one French, German, or Italian film. Out of this group of films one was bound to make money, thereby paying for the rest. I got some very reasonable refusals. They pointed out, quite rightly, that it would cost as much to launch a Filipino film as a French film, and that the French film was more or less a sure thing if they didn't spend too much and chose the right film, which is reasonable enough. Finally, one distributor said, "You're not going to sell this package anywhere no matter what it costs, because we're not ever going to be able to sell brown and yellow faces on the screen in North America." Now, I don't know where this racism starts, whether it's out on the street and he's right that people will not come, or it's that he sees racism where none exists, so it's a racism on the level of distribution. One of the things I wanted to do at the Festival of Festivals was demonstrate that people will come, will enjoy—that there's no problem. Also, I thought it would be nice to show distributors that a white audience could sit through something like *Peking Opera Blues* and just love it. I'm still convinced that all you have to do is get them into the cinema, and once you do they're going to love it and tell their friends.

So far no distributors have taken notice, and the state of things remains as it has been, with films being funnelled to the west through the efforts of a few interested individuals, mostly festival programmers. Lino Brocka jokingly remarks that the Asians are at the mercy of the white men, although he hastens to add that directors like himself are extremely grateful for the exposure of their work through festivals and for the opportunity this has afforded to develop a western audience, even a limited western audience. From an Asian point of view the problem is compounded by a number of other circumstances. Brocka points out that Philippine producers, for instance, have no interest in markets outside the Philippines if it means they have to pay for subtitling or assume even the slightest financial risk. This is largely true in other Asian countries as well. Philippine producers who go to Cannes bring only exploitation films and soft-porn for a quick sale. Neither is there a government agency actively promoting Philippine films to festivals and foreign theaters, although this absence has underlying political causes, since the films of greatest interest in the west are those like Brocka's, which dwell explicitly on social and economic issues and are therefore acts of dissent .

The Festival of Festivals provided an important forum for many of the Asian directors to meet and see each other's work for the first time. Surprisingly, there exists almost no exchange of films among various Asian cultures. A Korean film would never show in the Philippines and vice versa. Kung Fu films from Hong Kong are seen everywhere, but other examples of Hong Kong cinema are unknown in the surrounding Asian-Pacific nations. Overbey says, "If you go to the south part of Taiwan on a clear day and stand looking south you see this black lump. That's the Philippines 40 miles away, yet for some reason the films never cross that little piece of water."

The films that made up "Eastern Horizons" were familiar to western eyes in unexpected ways. Asian cinema takes genres absolutely seriously—some of the same genres that once prevailed in Hollywood. The romanticism, emotion, and formulaic construction of these films can be easy to relate to. Many of the films offered amazing cathartic experiences and the possibility of relearning to appreciate a form like melodrama, for instance, which western audiences have lost the capacity to treat as anything but parody since it faded from our cinematic tradition. One of the most enjoyable aspects of viewing these films was appreciating them as exceedingly skillful popular entertainments in which film artists, some of them very great ones, have worked with the pressures and limitations of a commercial industry to make works which of necessity appeal to a tremendously large audience. Formula is not a dirty word to these directors, and, if their audiences have certain formal and thematic expectations, the films attest to their skill in making well-worn themes and forms live as if newly invented for each film.

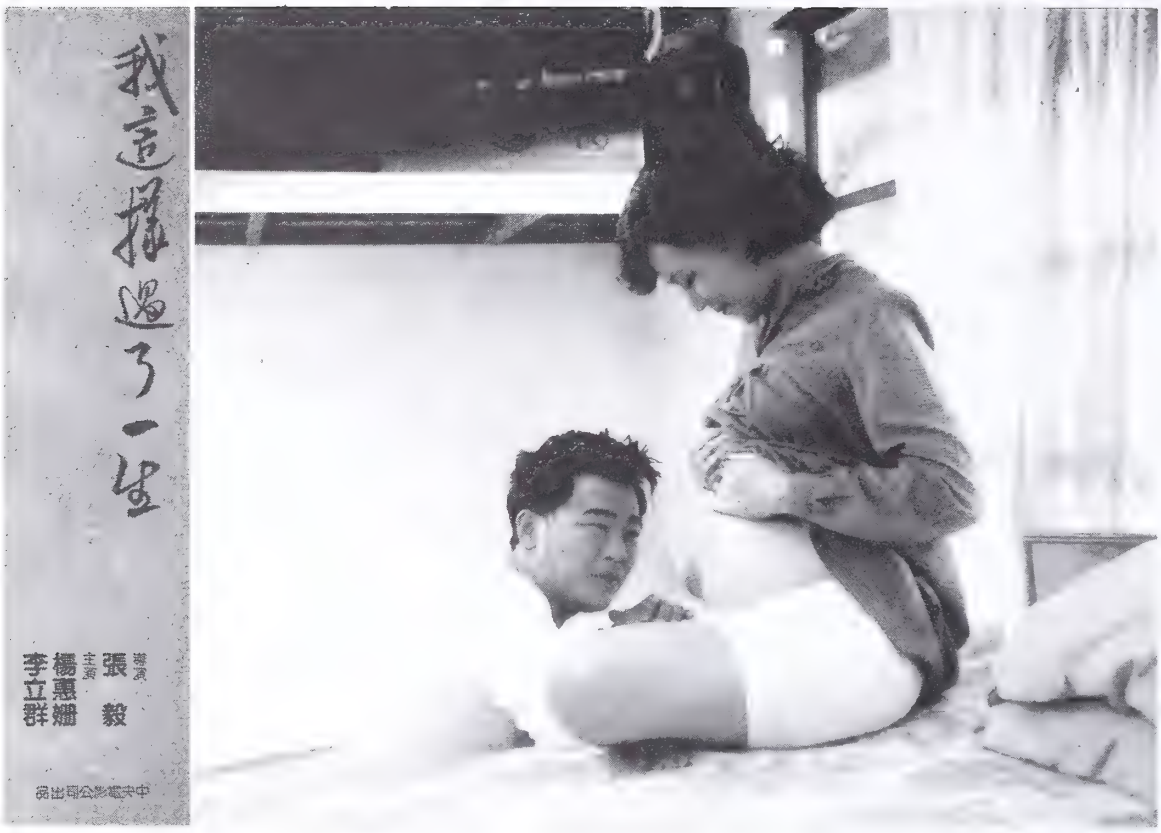
By far the earliest title included in "Eastern Horizons" was the 1959 Philippine film *Blessings of the Land*, by Manuel Silos. A simple and affecting story, it follows a rural couple from their wedding day through the birth and growth of their children, paralleling the growth of the lanzone orchard they plant which will only bear its valuable crop in 20 years' time. The film eases into the story with an extended and joyous musical sequence of the wedding day but then proceeds with a realism surprising for its time. This film had a profound influence on the work of Lino Brocka and the younger directors he influenced in turn. Mel Chionglo's *Playgirl* and Mario O'Hara's *Flower in the City Jail* show a similar high regard for the realism of social conditions while their films move in a more melodramatic direction to function as star vehicles for mightily suffering heroines.

Portraits of women, particularly suffering women, are a staple of Asian films. Two Taiwanese films, Wan Jen's *Ah Fei* and Chang Yi's *Kuei-mei, A Woman*, each deal with the life of a woman making the best of her marriage of expediency. In the first case it's an arranged marriage, in the second, the practical choice of an old maid who marries a widower with children. *Ah Fei* is a terrific expression of the lyricism of family pain which Asian audiences seemingly relish. Its depiction of a father-daughter relationship and the agonies suffered is purely delirious.

Among the most powerful films in the festival were *The Time to Live and the Time to Die* and *Dust in the Wind*, by Taiwanese director Hou Hsiao-hsien. Gentle, quiet, and profoundly moving, these substantially autobiographical films each portray the life of a boy growing up in Taiwan after his family has emigrated from the mainland. Hsiao-hsien's work is characterized by long takes and an unerring method for reproducing the emotional currents of family life with a clear-eyed realism that precludes sentimentality. He is one of the first directors to explore the theme of loss and the ambivalence about life in Taiwan that shaped many of his generation.

Meanwhile, Tony Au's *Dream Lovers* looked like a metaphor for the imminent reunion of Hong Kong and mainland China. A ghost story, one of Hong Kong's most popular genres, it brings together a reincarnated couple who discover each other in the twentieth century after 2,000 years apart. This flashy film has something for everyone—special effects, explicit sex, a tragic love triangle, plus historical flashbacks combined with a few history lessons involving archaeological finds.

Hong Kong has the most technically advanced film industry among the Asian nations, and the films made there are often unbelievably kinetic and extravagantly entertaining. A prime example shown at the festival was Tsui Hark's *Peking Opera Blues*. With a colorful plot that wouldn't be out of place in a spaghetti western, the film moves at a madcap pace, full of crazy chases, violence, macabre humor, and thousands of sight gags. John Woo's gangster film, *A Better Tomorrow*, an astonishing orgy of bloodshed, relies equally on



***Kuei-Mei, A Woman*, by Chang Yi, was programmed as a part of the "Eastern Horizons" program at the Toronto festival.**

action but is a dark, poetically violent vision, with homoerotic overtones of brotherly conflict and power struggles in Hong Kong's underworld. *A Better Tomorrow* holds the Hong Kong box office record, perhaps the best evidence that Woo has succeeded in merging his artistic and commercial concerns. Ann Hui, known on the festival circuit in the west for *The Spooky Bunch* and the controversial *Boat People*, also turns to action in a major way with her brand new three-hour epic *The Romance of Book and Sword*. Turning the historical drama of a much-filmed novel into a spectacle of lightning-fast martial arts sequences and chaotic battles, spiced with the occasional romantic interlude and even a musical number, Hui would seem a force to be reckoned with in the industry in the future.

Sexual matters comprise the subtext in a number of Korean films in a way that can be startling to westerners, for prostitution, rape, and debasement of women are depicted frequently, although it must be mentioned that these things are by no means absent from other Asian films. Kim Yi's *Fire Women Village* was the most problematic in this regard, using low comedy surrounding graphic sexual activity and a savage rape as the window dressing for a more serious treatment of a friendship's betrayal. David Overbey points out that Korean films often use sexuality in a context where problems of class difference are dealt with, as in Im Kwon Taek's *Surrogate Mother* or his *Ticket*, which portrays life in a brothel.

"Eastern Horizons" included only one film from Vietnam, Ho Quang Minh's *Karma*. This film is the first indication of an indigenous post-war Vietnamese film industry seen in the west and is, significantly, an anti-war story. It's a sure bet that *Karma* won't be the last film of this emerging cinema to be seen at the Festival of Festivals. The nagging fear felt by the festival administration that "Eastern Horizons" might not find an audience after all turned to relief with the mobbed premiere of the very first film. Overbey says, "In terms of the festival and my future, I can now book Asian films like a madman," adding, "The day that Hong Kong and Filipino films open regularly at your local cinema is the day I move on to something else."

Barbara Scharres is the associate director of the Film Center at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a freelance film critic and filmmaker.

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser. Listings do not constitute an endorsement & since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

ANN ARBOR FILM FESTIVAL. March, Michigan. Wide range of films screened at this "loosely structured" event, which, to cover diverse styles of ind. & avant-garde filmmakers, has no cats, guidelines or requirements for entries. Fest's 26th yr. Docs, animation, experimental, shorts & small features incl. & awards totalling $5,000 presented. "Best of" fest goes on nat'l tour to colleges & exhibition spaces, w/ 2/3 income going to participating filmmakers. Format: 16mm. Deadline: Feb. 19. Contact: Ann Arbor Film Festival, Box 8232, Ann Arbor, MI 48107; (313) 995-5356.

ATHENS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL. April 29-May 7, Ohio. W/ established reputation as showcase for ind. films, fest, now in 16th yr, features competition, premieres, guest workshops & retros. Yearly themes guide programming; last yr was "3rd World Perspectives." Several filmmakers attend as fest guests. Competitive cats incl. feature, experimental, animation, narrative, doc, educational, 100' film, young media artist (under 18 yrs) & super 8. Prizes totalling $2000 go to top 5 films. Work must have been completed after Jan. 1, 1987. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8; preview on 3/4", 1/2". Entry fees: $20, under 15 min.; $30, 15-50 min.; $50, over 50 min.; $15, young media artists & super 8. Deadline: Mar. 7. Contact: Ruth Bradley, director, Athens International Film Festival, Box 388, Athens, OH 45701 or Rm. 366 Lindley Hall, Ohio University, Athens, OH 45701; (614) 593-1330.

ATLANTA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL. May 22-28, Georgia. 12th edition of fest for ind. films & videos held in conjunction w/ 1988 Nat'l Alliance of Media Arts Centers (NAMAC) conference in Atlanta. Fest intention is to "showcase exciting new media works that go far beyond Hollywood & television in both form & content." Creative & technical awards of $5000 in cash & equipment go to winners in film or video cats of dramatic, experimental & animation; no sponsored, industrial, training, or commercial films accepted. This yr's judges: SWAMP program director Marion Luntz, filmmaker Tony Buba, videomaker & photographer

Paul Wong & video artist Ann Bray. Over 225 entries submitted last yr & 27 films & videos screened. Sponsored by IMAGE Film & Video Center in assoc. w/ High Museum of Art. Formats: 16mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2", Beta. Entry fees: $25 (filmmaker); $40 (distributor). Deadline: Feb. 12. Contact: IMAGE Film & Video Center, 75 Bennett, M1, Atlanta, GA 30309; (404) 352-4225.

BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL. March 26-April 9, Alabama. Nontheatrical educational works by ind., commercial & student producers eligible for awards in 13 cats, incl. Americana, applied & performing arts, teacher & career education, health & physical education, business & industry, human relations, early childhood, language arts, math/science, student prod., social sciences, aging, energy & environment. Awards are "Electra" statuettes, w/ cash prizes ranging from $200 (best of cat) - $1000 (best of fest); finalists receive certificates of recognition. Judging panels composed of volunteer preview committees of teachers, writers, students & subject specialists; finalists submitted to panel of nat'l judges for award selection. Entries must be under 60 mins., released between Jan. 1986 & Jan. 1988. Entry fees: Before Jan. 20—$25 (0-30 min.), $40 (31-60 min.), $15 student. After Jan. 20—$30 (0-30 min.), $50 (31-60 min.), $20 student. Competition in additional cats: $10/cat. Fest's 16th yr. Deadline: Feb. 1. Contact: Birmingham International Film Festival, 2100 Park Pl., Birmingham, AL 35203; (205) 226-3655.

DANIEL WADSWORTH MEMORIAL VIDEO FESTIVAL. April 29-May 13. Sponsored by Real Art Ways, regional media center supporting new art, video fest seeks ind. personal, experimental, introspective works of all cats, under 30 min. Prizes go to 6 winners: grand prize of $300 plus $200 purchase award, 2nd prize of $200 plus $200 purchase award, 4 show prizes of $100 each. Videos must have been completed in previous yr. Over 100 entries received last yr. Formats: 3/4" (preferred); 1/2". No fee, entrant pays $4 return shipping. Deadline: Mar. 1. Contact: Victor Velt, video curator, Real Art Ways, Box 3313, Hartford CT 06103-0313.

EXIT ART FIRST INTERNATIONAL SUPER 8 FESTIVAL. May 10-21, New York. All cats super 8. Jury: Larry Kardish, John Hanhardt, Jonas Mekas. Entry fee: $15. Deadline: Mar. 18. Contact: Exit Art, 578 Broadway, New York, NY 10012; (212) 966-7745.

HOUSTON INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL. April 22-May 1, Texas. 10th annual competition offers awards, grants, & recognition in 6 cats: feature, short, documentary, TV commercials, experimental & TV production; over 100 sub-cats incl. screenplays, 1st feature, local TV news, ecology, student, in-house, low-budget, computer-generated. This yr's fest will honor animator Chuck Jones. Last yr over 70 features, several of them world premieres & 200 shorts, documentaries & TV productions were screened out of a total of 2,100 entries. Entry fees: $35-150. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Mar. 15. Contact: Houston International Film Festival, Box 56566, Houston, TX 77256; (713) 965-9955.

HOWARD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS AUDIO, FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL & COMPETITION. February 18-20, Washington, D.C. Held during Howard Univ.'s miniconference & job fair on "Minorities & Communications: A Preview of the Future," competition open to both professional & student film & video producers. Entries on any topic, preferably related to conference theme; features, docs, animated & experimental works completed in last 2 yrs accepted. Shorts under 30 min., features under 90 min. Prizes of $300 to winning professional entry; $100 to winning student entry. Format: 16mm, super 8, 3/4". Deadline: Jan. 8. Contact: Henry Bourgeois, Dept. of Radio, TV & Film, School of Communications, Howard University, Washington, D.C. 20059; (202) 636-7927.

HUMBOLDT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL. May, California. One of oldest U.S. student-run fests, now in 21st yr, for experimental, narrative, doc & animated works. Awards total $1800; judged this yr by Dean C. Finley, Len Kirby & Ann-Sargent Wooster. Reel Solutions Peace Award to film best depicting creative peacemaking. Entries must be under 60 min. Entry fee: $25. Formats: 16mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Feb. 22. Contact: Humboldt Film & Video Festival, Dept. of Theatre Arts, Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA 95521; (707) 826-3566.

JOHN MUIR MEDICAL FILM FESTIVAL. June 18-25, California. 7th biennial int'l competition for films & videos on latest trends in medical, health-related & biomedical science subjects of importance to health care workers & consumers. Awards offered in over 40 cats, incl. such areas as aging, community health, contemporary issues, human sexuality, special people, AIDS, death & dying, ethics, drugs & society, women's health, genetics & patient education. Entries judged by more than 200 Bay Area medical professionals over 3 mo. period; over 400 received in 1986 edition. Awards incl. 1st & 2nd place, plus special awards for films w/ humanitarian & ethical importance; public health education (sponsored by European fest which honors technical medical films) & most innovative educational communication. 20,000 copies of fest catalog distributed nat'ly. Entries must have been completed in 2 previous yrs. Format: 16mm, 1/2", 35mm slide/tape programs, interactive video. Deadline: Jan. 31. Contact: Chip Bissell, fest director, John Muir Medical Center, 1601 Ygnacio Valley Rd., Walnut Creek, CA 94598; (415) 947-5303.

NEW ENGLAND FILM FESTIVAL. April, Massachusetts. Open to ind. & student filmmakers residing or attending school in ME, CT, RI, NH, MA & VT, fest presented by Arts Extension Service & Boston Film/Video Foundation & sponsored by the *Boston Globe*. Cash, film materials & services valued at over $5000 awarded; *Globe* sponsors $3000 best of fest award. Works must be under 60 mins. Winning films screened at Berklee Performance Center in Boston. Entry fees: $25, $15 (students). Formats: 16mm, super 8. Deadline: Feb. 1. Contact: Arts Extension Service, Division of Continuing Education, Goodell Bldg., University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003; (413) 545-2360.

NEWARK BLACK FILM FESTIVAL, June, New Jersey. Independent films which reflect black life, history & culture, eligible to compete for Paul Robeson Awards in 4 cats: doc, long narrative, short narrative & experimental. Screenings of selected films take place over 6 summer wks. Format: 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: Feb. 1. Contact: Robert Manuel, Newark Museum, 49 Washington St., Box 540, Newark, NJ 07101; (201) 596-6637.

RETIREMENT RESEARCH FOUNDATION NATIONAL MEDIA OWL AWARDS. May, Illinois. Outstanding films which creatively depict issues relating to aging, "capturing authentic images of older persons & illuminating the challenge & the promise of an aging society," eligible for competition in 4 cats: ind. films & videos; TV & theatrical film fiction; TV nonfiction & training films &

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San Francisco Art Institute Film Festival. March 25-26, California. 10th anniversary of fest geared toward new experimental, art-oriented & artist-made films. Entries must be under 35 mins. Over $1500 in cash & service prizes awarded by jury which this yr incl. NY filmmaker Peggy Ahwesh & MoMA's Larry Kardish. Formats: 16mm, super 8. Entry fee: $20 (US), $25 (int'l). Deadline: Feb. 6. Contact: Michael Rothman, director, San Francisco Art Institute Film Festival, 800 Chestnut St., San Francisco, CA 94133; (415) 771-7020.

Superfest International Media Festival on Disability Issues. May, California. Annual competition leading to public TV package, for films & videos which "accurately reflect the daily experience & abilities" of disabled persons. Awards for merit, presentation & best of fest in cats incl.: entries produced, written, or directed by persons w/ disabilities, developmental disabilities, arts & disabilities, employment, children, mental illness. Works previewed by committees throughout country. Sponsored by Corporation on Disabilities & Telecommunication. Entry fees: $45 professional, $25 amateur, $100 TV & feature. Format: 16mm, 1/2". Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Don Lake, Div. of Instructional Media & Information Systems, Los Angeles County Office of Education, 9300 E. Imperial Hwy, Downey, CA 90242-2890; (213) 922-6107.

United States Industrial Film Festival, June, Illinois. 21st annual competition exclusively for industrial & sponsored films produced for industry, associations, gov't, religious, charitable or educational orgs in such cats as advertising, employee communications, fundraising, industrial processes, public relations, training & medicine. Entries must have been produced in previous yr. Awards include Gold Camera Awards & Silver Screen Awards. Formats: 16mm, 3/4". Entry fee: $100. Deadline: Mar. 1. Contact: J.W. Anderson, chair, United States Festivals Association, 841 N. Addison Ave., Elmhurst, IL 60126; (312) 834-7773.

USA Film Festival. April 21-26, Texas. W/ special emphasis on US ind. films, 18th yr of fest will incl. 10th annual short film & video competition. Programmers seek to present world, nat'l & regional premieres of new work. Entries for competition must be under 60 min. & will be judged in narrative, nonfiction, animation, experimental & performance (dance, music, etc.) cats, each w/ $1000 1st place award. Grand prize winner invited to fest's award ceremony. Narrative & nonfiction features over 60 min. programmed by director, who will also program short films not in competition as part of fest's main program. Other program sections include great director tribute & music in film. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta. Fee: $35. Deadline: Mar. 1 (short film & video competition); Mar. 4 (feature films). Contact: Richard Peterson, artistic director, USA Film Festival, 2909-B Canton St., Dallas, TX 75226; (214) 744-5400.

Wine Country Film Festival. July 8-16, California. 2nd annual int'l showcase for new films programmed w/in 4 series: American Independents, Arts in Film (dance, music, painting, sculpture, filmmaking), Int'l Series & Films from Commitment (reflecting sense of personal & social responsibility). Some filmmakers invited to attend w/ films. Seminars & special programs honoring filmmakers, actors & contributors also featured, as well as other events centered around wine tasting. Fest presents award to film or distribution "company of the year." Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Mar. 1. Contact: Stephen Ashton, creative director, Wine Country Film Festival, Box 303, Glen Ellen, CA 95442; (707) 996-2536.

FOREIGN

British Industrial Film & Video Festival. June, England. Accepts films & videos in several cats, incl. education, training, safety, public welfare & social questions, technical, scientific, sales, public relations, ecology & environment & recreation. Films shown in London showcase & again at screening & awards presentation in Bristol. Awards are gold, silver & bronze statuettes. Entry fees: £110 per category plus VAT. Deadline: Jan. 24. Contact: British Industrial & Scientific Film Association, 102 Great Russell St., London WC1E 3LN, England; tel: (01) 580-0962.

Brussels International Festival of Fantastic & Science Fiction Film. March 11-26, Belgium. 6th annual feature film competition awards science fiction, horror & thriller films w/ Grand Prix "The Raven" (sculpture) & 2 special jury prizes (paintings); about 50 films shown annually. Program also incl. competition of European short films, contest for fantastic makeup & other special events. Audiences estimated at 35,000. Accommodation & expenditures (not airfare) covered for participating filmmakers. Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Freddy Bozzo, Peymey Diffusion A.S.B.L., 144 Ave. de la Reine, B-1210 Brussels, Belgium; tel: 32 02 2421713; telex 61344 CONTAC B (ext. 113).

Golden Rose of Montreux Television Festival. May 11-18, Switzerland. 28th yr of fest for light entertainment TV programs (music, comedy, variety), held at Palais des Congres in Montreux. Official network competition open to TV orgs; ind. producer competition (initiated in 1984) open to independently produced entries & will have own jury. Awards incl. Golden Rose of Montreux (w/ 10,000 Swiss francs), Silver Rose & Bronze Rose. Fest attended by over 750 TV execs & journalists from over 35 countries; about 40 network & 50 ind. entries compete. Must have been completed in 14 months prior to fest. Deadline: Mar.1 (ind. producers); Mar. 31 (network). Contact: John E. Nathan, N. American representative, 509 Madison Ave., Suite 1810, New York, NY 10022; (212) 223-0044.

Melbourne International Film Festival. June, Australia. Running in tandem w/ Sydney Film Festival & sharing many films, fest, entering 37th yr, programs features, docs & shorts. Its int'l short film competition, now in 27th yr, accepts shorts less than 60 min., or short fiction films less than 30 min., vying for $12,000 in prizes: $4000 grand prix, $1500 ea. special award to doc, fiction, animation & experimental, plus other awards & certificates. Feature section noncompetitive. Sidebars incl. program of children's films (for ages 5-17), retrospective, video art, experimental super 8 & seminars. Fest in triplex w/ over 1800 seats, plus smaller theater nearby; audience size estimated at 35,000. Most Australian buyers & distributors attend Sydney &/or Melbourne. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2"; 3/4" & 1/2" for preview. Deadline: Mar. 1. Contact: Melbourne International Film Festival, 41-45 A'Beckett St., Melbourne Victoria 3000, Australia; tel: (03) 663-1395/663-2954; telex: 152613 FIFEST.

Montbeliard International Video & Television Festival. October 3-9, France. Organized by Centre d'Action Culturelle de Montbeliard, biennial fest marks 4th anniversary as major int'l venue for doc & fiction videos. Features int'l competition for video works, competition for TV programs, market, exhibitions & programs from video training schools & art centers worldwide. Over 20 countries & 600 programs participated in past fests. Int'l competition prizes incl. 100,000 FF grand prix, 50,000FF 1st prizes to *recherche formelle*, doc & educational videos; 50,000FF to best school production. During 1986 fest, which fostered debate on questions of cultural identity, politics & media & state of ind. production, POINT 87, a fest/conference, organized to further discuss future & organize association of ind. European producers. Deadline: Feb. 15 (int'l competition), Mar. 15 all other sections (competition of TV programs, video schools, exhibitions). Contact: Michel Bongiovanni, Montbeliard TV, Centre d'Action Culturelle, BP 236, 25204 Montbeliard Cedex, France; tel: 81 91 37 11/81 91 49 67; telex: RCINF B202139F ATTN DF 18.

Piccadilly Film & Video Festival. June, England. 5th yr for noncompetitive London showcase, which last yr had theme of "Living Dangerously" & featured sellouts of London premieres, radical videos & retrospectives. Contact: Kate Leys, programmer, Piccadilly Film & Video Festival, 197 Piccadilly, London W1V 9LF, England; tel: (01) 381-6398.

Strasbourg International Film Festival of Human Rights. March, France. Presents films w/ themes of human dignity & human rights in multicultural world; films which condemn violations of basic human rights according to Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Competitive section incl. French premieres of new films; retro programs films that treat social, historical, humane situation from documented point of view. This is fest's 16th yr. Doc & narrative films of all lengths accepted; top prize of 20,000FF & 25,000FF prizes awarded. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Feb. 20. Contact: Institut International des Droits de l'Homme, 1, Quai Lezay-Marnesia, 67000 Strasbourg, France; tel: 88 35 05 50.

Taormina International Film Festival. July, Italy. Fest incl. "American Film Week" which emphasizes major studio releases on verge of Italian release; films in competition for gold, silver & bronze "Charybdis" awards last yr from all continents, incl. several 3rd world countries. Competition section is particularly interested in new directors of 1st & 2nd features. Fest now entering 34th yr. If new venue at Festival & Convention Palace in Taormina's main square completed this yr, fest will be held in winter, w/ American Film Week remaining in midsummer. Contact: Mario Natale/Sandro Anastasi, Festival delle Nazione Taormina, Ente Provinciale per il Turismo, Via Calabria, isol 346, 98100 Messina, Italy; tel: (396) 360 84 30.

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Deadlines for **Classifieds** will be respected. These are the 8th of each month, **two months** prior to the cover date, e.g., January 8 for the March issue. Make check or money order—no cash, please—payable to FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

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FOR RENT: Office space available. Ideal for independents. Pleasant atmosphere at a convenient downtown location. Affordable rates, with telephone, receptionist & other amenities. Contact Thom (212) 777-6900.

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FOR SALE: LTM fishpole, 14', $200. Electro-Voice 368 windscreen (football), $75. Magnasync studio tape degausser (heavy duty), $75. 5 pair Sony DR-Z7 headphones, $45/pr, $200/all. Call L. Loewinger (212) 226-2429.

FOR SALE: Audio Services Sound Cart w/ sliding drawer, top & side shelves, fibre shipping case, $775. Audio+DesignProPack II consumer-pro line level amp, $275. Carver M-400 amp, $125 as is. Call L. Loewinger (212) 226-2429.

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FOR SALE: 1/2" VHS editing system. 2 Panasonic AG 1950'S & controller. Under warranty, $1,800 firm. Sansui AV 99 SEG. Under warranty, $350. (212) 219-0396.

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FOR SALE: Sachtler 7+7 tripod w/ carbon fiber legs, baby legs, triangle & cases; new, $3200. LTM mike pole, $225, Spectra Prometer, Pentax Spotmeter, Sony TC-D5 synch recorder & resolver, $950. Nakamichi 550 Synch Cassette recorder, $550. ACL 400' mag, $800. Offers accepted (206) 285-3057.

Freelancers

NEEDED: Cameraman w/ own video equipment, Betacam or 3/4", to work 4-6 weeks on ecology project in Brazil. All expenses paid, crew provided. Project begins in March 1988. Call ASAP (212) 865-6274.

VIDEO PRODUCTION: Experienced crew with complete package, including Sony CCD Camera, BVU 110 with Time Code, Lowell DPs, Omnis & Totas. Full audio & many other extras. High quality VHS & 3/4" duplication also available. Call (212) 319-5970.

DIRECTOR/CINEMATOGRAPHER: 10th year specializing in unusual in-camera effects for complete 16mm music videos. Shoot, cut, transfer. Cost effective true artistic filmmaking. Arriflex, Ang., Sachtler, Lowel, car. 40 min. from NYC. Call for reel & rates. Gerard Yates (914) 764-8558.

3/4" VIDEO PRODUCTION PACKAGE w/ new Sony DXC 3000 camera, 15:1 Canon Lens, VO-6800 recorder & lighting, etc., w/ experienced cameraperson &/or assistant at reasonable rates. VHS & 8mm production also available. Call John Hession (212) 529-1254.

STUNT COORDINATOR/SPECIAL EFFECTS Artist: Experience in high falls, full burns, precision driving, bullet hits, explosions & more. Specialty camera operator including free-fall cinematographer & steadicam. Brian Veatch (303) 252-0111.

AWARD WINNING CAMERAMAN with good eye, good temperament & Arriflex S.R. package. Interested in documentaries & features. Reel available upon request. Call Doron at (212) 620-9157.

IND. PRODUCER/DIRECTOR seeks 10 to 30 minute script for showcase film. Small cast, affordable idea. Treatments/proposals also accepted. Some pay. Contact: Mark Mannucci, 162 Ninth Ave., NYC 10011; (212) 645-0310.

EXPERIENCED GAFFER available for interesting projects. Lighting packages, generators, location van & crew. Call for appointment. J. Anthony Productions (516) 294-1038.

PHOTOS BY LES SIMON: 35mm still photographer available for location scouting, set shoots, publicity shoots or what have you. Experienced, reasonable. Box 2287, New York, NY 10009; (212) 724-2800 (service).

COMPOSER: Classically trained with Ph.D. in composition & long-time interest in film, would like to do music for film or video. I work primarily with electronically generated or sampled sounds in my own studio. If you need music, call Michael at (212) 755-1641.

PRODUCTION CREW SOUGHT (Ohio area only) by independent film producer for part-time, low budget, dramatic feature project. Needed are assistant camera op. (16mm), production sound person, gaffer, grip & assistant director. Contact Paul (614) 268-5625 aft. 5pm Mon-Fri; anytime weekends.

3/4" EDITING: Sony BVUs with 4-trk mix/cassette, char. gen. $25/hr with editor. Location 3/4" shooting 2-man crew from $40/hr. Design, installation & maintenance of video & RF systems. Call Michael Posner (212) 691-0375.

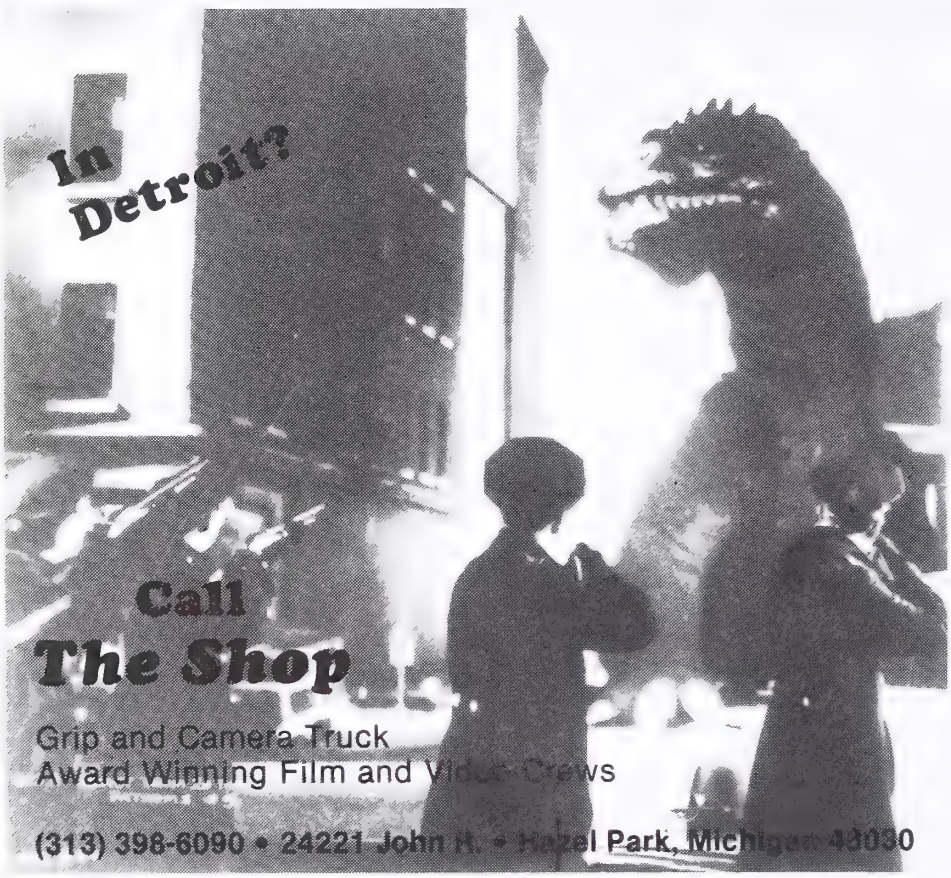
WANTED: Experienced writer for feature docudrama in Atlanta. Call (404) 233-2032.

COPRODUCER OR AD willing to fundraise wanted by producer (Blue Ribbon winner of American Film Fest) for contemporary "Portraits in Courage" home video & TV series. Base salary & high commissions. Proposal & business plan avail. Resumé & letter: Box 21538, Washington, DC 20009; (202) 332-3456.

DO YOU SPEAK SPANISH? DP, AC, Sound Recordist & PA wanted for political documentary to be shot in Honduras. Prefer candidates with previous experience in Central America. Send resume to: Guadalupe Productions: Box 366, Prince St. Station, New York, NY 10012.

COMPOSER: Experienced, versatile musician to create soundtracks for student & independent films. Extremely reasonable rates. Charles (212) 885-0223.

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ACCOMPLISHED COMPOSER/ARRANGER will create score for your film or video. Experience the difference between original & stock music. Synthesizer & orchestral works—from classical to rock—avail. upon request. Can work within most budgets. Eskow Music (201) 647-8555.

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SOUND TRANSFERS: 16/35mm, all speeds & formats, including multi-track & time code. Full FX Library. Evening & weekend service available, convenient downtown location. Low rates. Downtown Transfer (212) 255-8698.

16MM FLATBEDS: 6-plate flatbeds for rent in your workspace or fully equipped downtown editing room with 24 hr access. Cheapest rates in NYC for independent filmmakers. Call Philmaster Productions (212) 873-4470.

BETACAM EDITING with good list management available by the week or month. T. Drew Co. (212) 769-9177.

NEGATIVE MATCHING: 35mm, super 16mm, 16mm cut for printing or video transfer. Credits include Jim Jarmusch, Wim Wenders & Lizzie Borden. Reliable results at reasonable rates. One White Glove. Tim Brennan, 225 Lafayette St. #914, New York, NY 10012; (212) 966-9484.

COMPLETE 3/4" EDITING SUITE available with expert editor. Reasonable prices. Call Roland Millman, Merchandising Workshop (212) 239-4646.

NEGATIVE MATCHING: Complete 35mm & 16mm service. Discount available to AIVF members & students. Contact Wood Lam (212) 633-0815.

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NOTICES

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. **The Independent** reserves the right to edit for length.

Deadlines for **Notices** will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date, e.g., January 8 for the March issue. Send notices to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Conferences • Workshops

BLACK FILMMAKERS FOUNDATION has launched monthly creative workshops for professional members of BFF, offering opportunity to polish crafts in a workshop setting. Each workshop performance will be videotaped for immediate playback to allow group discussion & critique of writing, direction & performances. Held monthly on Sats, free participation limited to BFF members. Contact: Donna Green, BFF Membership Coordinator; (212) 924-1198.

Films • Tapes Wanted

INDEPENDENT EYE: KQED-TV in San Francisco seeks independent films & tapes of 1-20 min. in length that fuse the performing arts & television broadcast medium, incl. dance, music, comedy, theater, performance or video/film art pieces. (Traditional doc format not acceptable.) Program to be broadcast on monthly broadcast showcase *Independent Eye*. Payment of $10/min. w/ minimum fee of $50. Send submissions to KQED, 500 8th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-2269.

SUBMIT VIDEOTAPES to Water Tower Art Assn. for gallery exhibition & distribution. All genres. Deadline: Jan. 31, 1988. Send tapes w/ return postage, mailer & bio to Ron Schildknecht, Water Tower Art Assn., 3005 Upper River Rd., Louisville, KY 40207; (502) 896-2146.

THE ASIA SOCIETY is looking for shorts & new docs on Asia or Asian Amer. subjects by independent filmmakers for Spring 1988 film series. Filmmakers w/ recently completed films, or films nearing completion, please contact Somi Roy, Film Program Coordinator, the Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., New York, NY 10021; (212) 288-6400.

TAPES & FILMS WANTED by independents in animation (political animation, new technologies in video & innovative/conceptual use of film/video tech.); documentaries (on nuclear disarmament, radiation, new weaponry, scientific research w/ regard to high energy astrophysics, wave transmission & electricity, communications, photographic technology & UFOs). For TV series *Videoville*, which will air one time only on the Learning Channel. Artist fees now $12/min. Contact Wendy Chambers, Artmusic, Inc., 533 W. 49th St., #6, New York, NY 10019; (212) 586-1911.

THE DISCOVERY CHANNEL seeks 60 min., 30 min. & short single & series docs that focus on people, places & cultures: nature & wildlife, history, science & tech. & human adventure. Topics not under consideration incl. drama, children's programs, performing arts, instructional video & barter programs. Send submissions to the Discovery Channel, Program Acquisitions, 8201 Corporate Dr., Ste. 1260, Landover, MD 20785.

THE TERMINAL: New gallery/performance space in Brooklyn seeks experimental films for monthly screenings. Objective is to show film artists' work to dance/performance/fine artists and create a new outlet for experimental filmmakers. Contact: Suzanne Boucher (212) 254-5958 or the Terminal (718) 783-8946.

LONDON VIDEO ARTS and Interim Art seeks entries for Genlock, a video exhibition touring UK galleries through 1988. Particular interest in works that explore a conversational or monologue format, comic or serious, which are accessible and address the viewer directly. 10 min. max., on VHS or U-Matic. Deadline: Jan. 30. Send tapes to: Genlock, London Video Arts, 23 Frith St., London W1V 5TS. U.K.

HEALTH MEDIA DISTRIBUTOR w/ active line of AIDS-related films & videos seeks additional new productions on AIDS for distribution. Maximum exposure guaranteed, high royalities. (217) 384-4838, collect.

WOMEN OF COLOR FILM PROGRAM: Equal Media of London presenting tapes & films directed by women of color on U.K.'s Channel 4 beginning Nov. '88. Series will incl. shorts, docs, features, animation & experimental works on 16mm, 35mm, or video; directed & preferably produced by women for theatrical, TV, or community distribution. Contact: Parmindir Vir, Equal Media Ltd., 1 Wakeman Rd., Kensal Rise, London NW10 5BJ, U.K.; 01-960-6876.

THE LEARNING CHANNEL's spring '88 season of *The Independents* series will showcase films & tapes addressing issues related to aging. Nonfiction, narrative, experimental & animation are welcome. Themes include: Images & Perceptions, the Aging Body, Memories & Older Expressions. Programs not broadcast in last 5 years given priority. Contact: Aging Series, c/o Roberta Grossman, 641 N. Poinsettia Pl., L.A., CA 90035; (213) 934-6507.

Opportunities • Gigs

TEACH IN JAPAN: Individuals with a degree or experience in video & video production wishing to teach English for one year in Japan to employees of major coporations/govt. ministries, write: Int'l Education Services, Shin Taiso Bldg., 10-7, Dogenzaka 2-chome, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150, Japan.

POSITION AVAILABLE: Operations Manager at Pittsburgh Filmmakers, a regional media arts ctr. Responsible for mgmt. of equip., facilities & physical plant. Salary $15-17,000/yr commensurate w/ exp. Send letter of appl. & current resumé to Personnel Comm., Pittsburgh Filmmakers, Box 7467, Pittsburgh, PA 15213.

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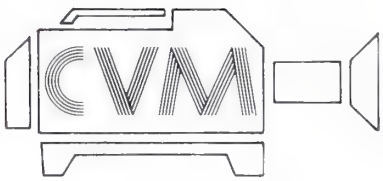
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For more information, write: Ethan Young, Membership Services, AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

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MANAGING DIRECTOR wanted at Film in the Cities, St. Paul-based media arts ctr. w/ $1.5-million budget. Responsibilities incl. personnel & financial adm., facilities mgmt, liaison to board, policy implementation & planning. Also open: position for Film/Video (& Performance) Director to program new 270 seat theater w/ 35mm, 16mm & video projection. May also program performance art, new music & jazz. Send resumés to Richard Weise, Film in the Cities, 2388 University Ave., St. Paul, MN 55114.

HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE seeks teacher in writing for the media: scriptwriting, doc research & writing, broadcast news &/or print journalism w/ interest in cultural prod. & problems of minority/3rd World representation. Graduate study/terminal degree required. 3-year renewable contract starting Sept. 1988. Application reviews begin Jan. 1988. Send letter, vita, references, writing sample to Communications Search Comm., CCS, Hampshire College, Amherst, MA 01002.

RADIO-TV-FILM DEPT. at Temple Univ. seeks 2 additional faculty members. Premium placed on expertise in film & video analysis & communication arts, but applications are invited for tenure-track positions combining expertise in documentary film/video production, TV production, writing for the media, broadcast news, communciations theory & mass communciations studies. Prior professional &/or teaching experience, plus commitment to undergrad & grad instruction required. Rank & salary dependent on exp. Women & minorities encouraged to apply. Deadline: March 1. Send letter, resumé, 3 references to: Herbert Dordick, Chair, Radio-TV-Film Dept., Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122.

Publications • Software

THIRD WORLD NEWSREEL 20th Anniversary program guide & catalogue lists two decades of social issue film & video. Available from Third World Newsreel, 335 W. 38th St., 5th fl., New York, NY 10018; (212) 947-9277.

SOUTHERN AFRICA MEDIA CENTER now offers educators & activists a pkg. of 6 video programs on Southern Africa for $595 (otherwise $195 per title). Titles incl. *Winnie & Nelson Mandela, Generations of Resistance, Bound to Strike Back, Destructive Engagement, Corridors of Freedom, South Africa Belongs to Us.* Contact Southern Africa Media Ctr., California Newsreel, 630 Natoma St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 621-6196.

FRONTLINE SOUTH AFRICA: Channel 4 study guide for the programs *Frontline Southern Africa: Destructive Engagement* & *Corridors of Freedom* incls. bibliography. Published by Channel 4 TV, 60 Charlotte St., London W1P 2AX, England.

WORK BY WOMEN: special issue of *Art & Cinema* incls. articles & interviews on womens film, video, theater & dance. Vol. 1, No. 3, Fall '87. Art & Cinema, Box 1208, Imperial Beach, CA 92032.

Resources • Funds

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS: Arts Adm. Fellows Program encompasses 13 wks at NEA's Washington, DC offices to become acquainted w/ the policies & operations of the agency & gain a nat'l overview of arts activities. Deadline: Jan. 8, 1988. Contact: Arts Adm. Fellows Program, NEA, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES: Next deadline for humanities projects in the media: March 18, 1988. Contact: James Dougherty, NEH, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 786-0378.

SOUTHEAST MEDIA FELLOWSHIP AWARDS: for prod. grants of up to $5,000 for new works or works-in-progress & for Equip. Access Grants. Deadline: Feb. 1, 1988. Contact SEMFP, c/o Appalshop, Box 743, Whitesburg, KY 41858; (606) 633-0108.

SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COUNCIL: Grants in Aid Program for Professional Discipline/Individual Artists application deadline: Jan. 15, 1988; Contact: SCAC, 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201; 734-8696.

NEW YORK STATE FILM EXHIBITION PROGRAM grants available from the Film Bureau. Offered to nonprofit organizations in NYS for film screenings of ind. works or films not ordinarily available to the public. Matching funds of up to $300 are available for film rentals & up to $200 per speaking engagement for presentations by filmmakers, producers, directors, technicians & scholars. Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Film Bureau, F/VA, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003-4797; (212) 673-9361.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING'S Open Solicitation deadlines for FY '88: Jan. 8 & April 22, 1988. For appls, contact: CPB, 1111 16th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 955-5100.

HARVESTWORKS: Artists-in-Residence program for artists working w/ audio as creative medium. Residency offers studio prod. time to complete a new work at Studio PASS, incl. studio redesigned w/ 10' x 15' "live" recording room, new mixing console, 24 in & 8 out & 1/2" 8-trk to Macintosh computer synchronization. Artists receive 20-40 hrs of access to studio, full-time engineer, tape & other materials. Radio projects welcome. Artists in audio, film, dance, video, radio, music, theater & performance art encouraged to apply, regardless of technical skills. Deadline: Jan. 8, 1988. Contact: Debbie McBride, Harvestworks, AIR Program, 596 Broadway, #602, New York, NY 10012; (212) 431-1130.

REAL ART WAYS Audio & Video Access Center available to ind. producers. Multi-track recording studio & 3/4" shooting & editing video facility. Subsidies offered for portion of user cost. Consultation, production & technical assistance also provided. Contact: Marty Fegy, technical director or Victor Velt, video curator, Real Art Ways, 94 Allyn St., Hartford, CT, 06103-1402.

FUSION/FISSION, a regrant program that commissions interdisciplinary projects by artists from New England (ME, NH, VT, RI, MA, CT), accepting applications

postmarked by Jan. 9. Five to seven commissions of $2000-$6000 awarded. Send six copies of: one-pg. narrative, itemized budget, project timeline, resumés; send one copy of applicants' work samples. For details contact: Jill Stone, Fusion/Fission, Real Art Ways, 94 Allyn St., Hartford, CT 06103; (203) 525-5521.

HALLWALLS, recipient of a $24,500 "Program Initiative for Interdisciplinary Artists" regrant from the Rockefeller Foundation in conjunction with the NEA, will award 10 grants of $1000-$4000 to interdisciplinary artists residing in upstate NY, OH & WV. Contact: Dawn Dumpert. Hallways also received a $6000 Film Regrant from the New York State Council on the Arts, and will award 5-10 grants ranging from $500-$1000 to filmmakers in the Western NY counties of Allegheny, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans & Wyoming. Contact: Steve Gallagher. Deadlines: Feb. 1. Hallwalls, 700 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14202; (716) 854-5828.

APPARATUS PRODUCTIONS, a nonprofit organization, seeks scripts for short experimental narrative films planned for prod. in spring 1988. For appl. send SASE to 225 Lafayette, Rm 507, New York, NY 10012.

FILM/VIDEO PROJECT SPONSORSHIP: The Collective for Living Cinema serves as a nonprofit sponsorship organization for selected film & video projects. For information & guidelines contact: Jack Walsh, Collective for Living Cinema, 41 White Street, New York, NY 10013; (212) 925-3926.

Trims & Glitches

CONGRATS to Orinne J.T. Takagi, who has been awarded a grant from the Sojourner Truth Fund of the Funding Exchange's National Community Funds for her documentary *Korea: Homes Apart.*

KUDOS to Pacifica Radio Archive, recently awarded a $55,000 grant from the Nat'l Historical Publications & Records Commission of the National Archives to assist in the restoration of about 7,000 public radio programs from the early 1950s, '60s & '70s.

AIVF member Nan Helm has been awarded 1st prize at the Suffolk Film & Video Festival. Congrats!

KUDOS to AIVF members who earned 1987 Southeast Film & Video Fellowships: Julie Dash, *Daughters of the Dust*; Mark Mori, *Building Bombs*; Ross Spears, *Famous Men*; Nancy Yasecko, *Lagoon*; Tom Davenport, Sand Mountain documentary; Lucy Massie Phenix, *Galapagos*; Andrew Garrison, Earl Gilmore documentary & Eric Mofford, *Travelin' Trains.*

CONGRATULATIONS to Robert Walker, winner of an Equipment Access Grant from the South Carolina Arts Commission Media Arts Center.

KUDOS to Larry Loewinger, nominated for an Emmy for his work as supervising engineer & techical producer on *Vladimir Horowitz: The Last Romantic.*

CONGRATS to Gordon Hitchens, selected as Foundation Fellow by the Writers Guild of America East for his screenplay *The Diamond Pilot* & treatment *Old Man Moses.*

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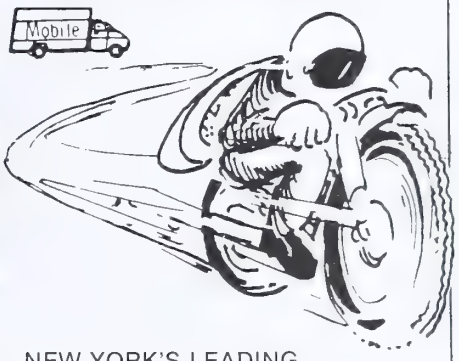
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CORRECTIONS

We would like to apologize for omitting picture credits for Lily Diaz, the photographer responsible for the reproductions of photographs from the archive of the Division of Community Education in Puerto Rico that accompanied the article "Films with a Purpose: A Puerto Rican Experiment in Social Film," by Inés Mongil Echandi and Luis Rosario Albert, in the July issue of *The Independent*.

Also, in the caption for the cover photo for the October issue we failed to identify the actor in Woody Vasulka's videotape *Art of Memory*; he is dancer, choreographer, and teacher Daniel Nagrin.

AIVF THANKS

We wish to thank the following individuals for their contributions to the AIVF/Emergency Legislative Fund: Roy Campanella Jr., Howard Dratch, Kathleen Herman, Arthur Kamett, Doug LeClaire, Michael Loukinen, and Jesus Trevino. The fund was established to help subsidize a campaign to secure public television reforms and establish a National Independent Program Service that will guarantee funding, promotion, and distribution of independent film and video. Those who would like to receive information or to make contributions should write or send checks, payable to AIVF/Emergency Legislative Fund, to: AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

We would also like to thank Arthur Dean for his contribution to the AIVF/National Coalition Fund, established for the same purposes.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, an information clearinghouse, and a grant making program. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, foundations and organizations: The New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, the Governor's Office of Motion Picture and Television Development, the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, the Consolidated Edison Company of New York, the Benton Foundation, the Funding Exchange, and the dozens of organizations that advertise in *The Independent*.

INDEPENDENT BOOKSHELF

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Jackson, $20.00

How to obtain government, corporate, and foundation grants; how to write a proposal; budgets; sample film from start to finish; other useful publications.

Independent Feature Film Production
Goodell, $9.95

Legal structures and financing, the preproduction package, the production process, post-production, distribution and marketing, samples of limited partnership agreements and budgets.

The Copyright Primer for Film and Video
Sparkman, $3.50

Practical copyright information: what is covered by copyright, registration procedure, exceptions, sample releases.

Selected Issues in Media Law
Mayer, $2.50

Legal information on copyrights, option agreements, distribution contracts, glossary of legal terms.

Before You Shoot
Garvey, $10.00

Manual for the production side of filmmaking—from the idea stage to distribution.

The Independent Film and Videomakers Guide
Wiese, $16.95

Advice on film and video financing; investor presentations; limited partnerships; market research, distribution; list of buyers of non-theatrical films; pay TV, foreign TV and home video, contacts for music videos.

Home Video: Producing for the Home Market
Wiese, $16.95

Advice on development and distribution of original home video programs, new marketing opportunities for independent producers, and info on presentations, bugeting, and contracts.

Film and Video Budgets
Wiese, $16.95

How to prepare budgets for documentaries, commercials, shorts, low budget features, pay TV segments, and music videos. Practical advice on budgeting, negotiations, and money-saving tips; sample budgets.

Ship Shape Shipping
Lidell, $3.00

Practical advice on international transport of films and video tapes; using post office/private shipping services; customs requirements.

Sponsorships: A Guide for Video and Filmmakers
Goldman/Green, $6.00

How to find, choose, and work with nonprofit sponsors, including resource list and sample letters of agreement.

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AN AIVF SEMINAR ON AUDIOCASSETTE

A panel discussion on international festivals and trends in overseas marketing options for independents, held on September 30, 1987

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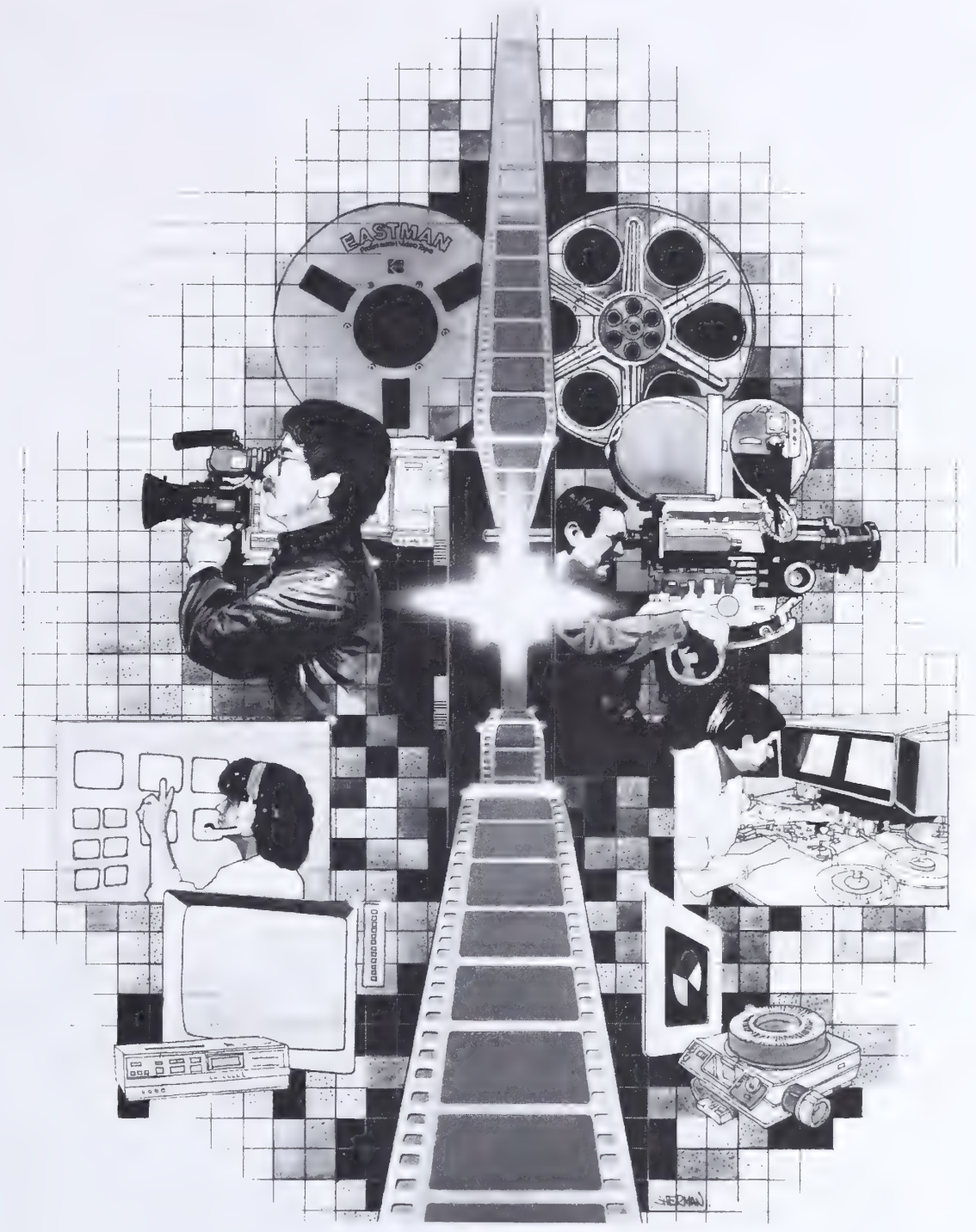
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COVER: An anti-Vietnam War student demonstrator waits to be hauled off in a paddy wagon in *The War at Home*, a film which makes extensive use of old TV news footage. In "Sleuth: The Search for Television News Footage" Patricia Thomson tells how some producers have successfully tracked down and obtained licensing for archival material from TV stations and from the growing number of local television archives. Photo: Skip Heine, the *Capitol Times*, Madison.

LETTERS

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

To the editor:

I had just finished celebrating Bill Viola's video installation opening at the Museum of Modern Art when I read the dismal quote by Neil Seiling on the cover of the November *Independent* about the state of video. [*Ed.'s note:* This quote is the epigram for Renee Tajima's "The Video Trade, Part Two: Promotion, Pricing, and Percentages."] I find it not only misleading but the wrong and potentially damaging signal for AIVF to be broadcasting. The past year has seen the exposure of independent video through museums, festivals, media centers, libraries, schools, universities, video stores, community and special interest groups, cable access, the Learning Channel, Campus Network, PBS, Showtime, Bravo, NBC, satellite transmissions, etc. Contrary to Neil's comment that "there's not a whole lot of traffic in video," traffic has never been heavier.

The impact cannot be measured in dollars alone, as Renee does in her article. Part of our role as independents is to influence mainstream media by serving as an experimental laboratory for technique and by carrying messages that the commercial enterprises can't or won't. The experiment is time-consuming and risky. Production sometimes does require the monastery setting Neil mentions. Although art video distributors choose more experimental, esoteric, and difficult video, they usually have too much work for their small staffs rather than a lack of traffic. It may be that there are more distributors of art video than the market can sustain. But their diversified approach is important in order to develop new audiences for intentionally unusual tapes.

There is no doubt that art video has smaller audiences than prime time television. However, the quote and Renee Tajima's article wrongly generalized art video distribution to the whole field. In addition, overall demand is underreported by Tajima's article. Some additional art video distributors like ArtCom, Art Metropole, and Voyager Press were ignored. The more commercial broadcast/cablecast/foreign distributors (like Devillier-Donegon, Fox/Lorber, Coe Film Associates, King Features Syndicate, and others), which enthusiastically and successfully carry independent video, were omitted entirely. The importance of self-distribution was underestimated. Although markets expand and shrink with the economy, video industry developments, and government budget policies, there is a proven demand for independent video once it is produced.

If the cover quote and Tajima's article intend to challenge *Independent* readers, perhaps the response from independent video- and filmmakers should be directed to our representatives in Washington, urging support for increased budgets for the National Endowment for the Arts, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and other funders of independent media. It is funding for promotion and audience development by nonprofit distributors, for tape acquisition and rental by public institutions, and for independent video and TV production that is in short supply, not traffic.

—Skip Blumberg
New York, NY

To the editor:

I would like to thank *The Independent* and Renee Tajima for the recent two-part series on video art distribution ["The Video Trade, Part One: The Distributors," October 1987, as well as "Part Two," mentioned above]. At this time, when the rules of distribution are changing, we need further discussion and communication between the individuals and organizations involved.

But I would like to add my voice to the chorus of opinions on this subject, given the discussions at the National Alliance of Media Arts Centers' conference last June, as well as previous debates, because I believe that many people are asking incomplete questions. For instance, I do not think that Neil Seiling's quote about video art existing only in "monasteries" should be taken negatively, because to me, that is where Art lives. Art cannot go to the masses, one must make pilgrimages to art. Everyone continually clamors about the communicative properties of video—that it is a revolutionary art form for the masses. I believe that this is false, that artists are mistaking a technical property of the medium for the essence of an art form. Artists' personal expression may not survive a process that concentrates on mass distribution.

Paradoxically, as we complain about the vapidness of the mass media, we all scrabble for a piece of the pie, unaware that the problem lies not in the product we introduce into the system, but in the system itself. Of course, social issue video fashions itself as a visionary and propagandistic tool. Yet, to be distributed, to be transmitted, and to be eventually consumed by the mass audience, video must overemphasize its technical properties. At the commercial extreme such videos become slick. Videos of this sort no longer resemble an original informative vision, but are merely reassuring commodities for the mass consumer of the status quo. Art is fragile and exists only as an act of creation within a certain time and space. If one attempts to remove the work from its structure of creation and meaning, it becomes stripped of all references. This is the danger of mass distribution.

Like other distributors, I feel the pinch of being caught between a lack of funds and the pressure of the market-driven home video world. At Intermedia Arts we are adapting to these pressures, but to blindly adopt models of mass distribution based on quantitative input and output, on price and volume, is sheer folly. Sure, I wish I sold more tapes, but the criteria for success on those terms is solely capitalist and not necessarily adequate when judging artistic and educational value. I agree with Lawrence Daressa of California Newsreel, who stated at the NAMAC conference, "Our promotion and marketing of media arts must reflect the fact that we are no longer selling or screening videotape commodities so much as new ways of seeing."

Distribution serves a very important promotional role. It is one path into the world, but it is a delusion to believe that it can replace our schools, libraries, media arts centers, museums—our "monasteries"—and we should be grateful for them. Maybe we should not question the acceptance of video art in the world but examine our commitment to ourselves and to our monasteries. Why are there so few left? Why are they not supported?

—Bob Gale
distribution director, Intermedia Arts of Minnesota
Minneapolis, MN

MARKET TRENDS

To the editor:

In "Final Cut at the IFP Market" ["Media Clips," by Martha Gever, with Janet Wickenhaver, January/February 1988] a number of important questions were raised regarding the selection process of the IFP-East Market. I attended this year's market representing the U.S. Film Festival as one of the documentary film programmers. However, I spent most of my time working as president of Direct Cinema Limited, a distributor of documentaries, short films, and specialized features.

I agree with your analysis of this year's market in terms of the selection process. One of the many outstanding documentary features rejected for fuzzy reasons was Whitney Blake's *Reno's Kids*. Whitney is a Los Angeles-based independent whose first feature documents the story of Reno Taini, a California teacher who shows students that they can succeed. The film should have been in the market. This is one "market" that should be open to all independents who wish to have their films or videotapes shown. Whitney and other independent filmmakers whose work was rejected were done an enormous disservice by the IFP.

Another issue not mentioned in your article was the IFP's decision to hold its "market" with limited film and video screening facilities. Most

markets in the world use multiple screening facilities for film and tape. Further, most markets are set up for distributors, not just filmmakers, to show work to buyers. There is no reason why the IFP market could not be shorter (to make it easier for people coming to New York from out of town), faster (by using dozens of video screening facilities, perhaps in hotel suites to facilitate screening on request), and larger (by showing more films and tapes). Other questions arise concerning location and timing. This "market" is still in the wrong city at the wrong time of year. Independents would be better served by a market in Los Angeles preceding the American Film Market, the largest market for features in the world, held in the spring. As it is, the market is now scheduled in the fall, coinciding with the New York Film Festival which shows far too few independent works to attract buyers. At that time of year most recent independent works have already been in the marketplace for months (in many cases, trying to get into the New York Film Festival or Telluride). By coming in the spring, the market would take place at what's commonly considered the beginning of the film year (along with other key events on that calendar—the U.S. Film Festival in January, the AFM, and Cannes in May), not the end.

—Mitchell W. Block
Los Angeles, CA

To the editor:

Your article with Janet Wickenhaver on the IFP Market was strange, doctrinaire, and thoroughly retrograde. In the first instance, you are critical of "curatorial control." But through the body of the essay you berate the IFP for lacking criteria for its selection process. Which is to be criticized: the *principle* of selection or the *criteria* for selection?

Curating—a.k.a. editing, selecting, framing, history, culture, context, etc.—is the air we breathe, inescapable in life or philosophy. To think otherwise epitomizes the great myth of laissez-faire pluralism championed by the far right. You and Wickenhaver appear to take this far right (or is it ultra left?) position.

Curatorial work is a qualitative service, an intervention into the field to select work for a specific context. It is work that the IFP Market should and must perform: in the service of the field to establish intentions, create criteria, and make selections. A laissez-faire marketplace is a capitalist's dream. Wake up!

What those intentions are and which criteria are adopted is obviously open to debate. Here you are right in your (long-winded) criticism of the organization. These challenges come with the territory and the IFP will rise to meet them.

—Tony Safford
director, Exhibitions and Conferences,
Sundance Institute
Burbank, CA

Martha Gever replies:

I can only agree with Safford that no "market" is "free"—that is, not free from the values of those who control it. The questions and analysis contained in my article on the IFP Market precisely address that point. In other words, I didn't immediately accede to Robert Odell and Karen Arikian's explanations that their decisions were ultimately "subjective" but tried to determine what subjectivities were at work when they rejected films and videotapes for screening at the IFM. Since neither of them was willing to tell me, I could only point out the discrepancies between the official criteria invoked and the selections they made.

Of course, the more obvious contradiction that I discerned in the IFP's recent restructuring of the Market was that between the commonly held understanding of a film or television market—open to those willing to pay the fee—and a curated exhibition like a festival, where selection processes are overtly declared. My own political philosophy has nothing to do with these definitions.

What is pertinent in an evaluation of the IFM is its claim to provide a market, not a festival, for independent work. If this seems like mere wordplay, witness the $150 fee the IFP charges to attend the event, a price perhaps affordable for buyers but not for most film buffs, or magazine editors for that matter. In this light, it seems reasonable to question the IFP's policies of exclusion, as Block and others have done. If the IFP now decides that it must limit entries—which, as Block points out, is not the only possible solution to the IFM's new-found popularity—the administrators of the Market can be asked to clarify their procedures and criteria. As an organization supported by public funds, they have a responsibility to do so. They have the additional responsibilty to not mislead independent film- and videomakers who pay to use their services. Whether or not the IFP will undertake such clarifications remains to be seen.

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ARTISTS ACT TO REFORM TAX REFORM ACT

According to the politicians responsible for the 1986 Tax Reform Act, the new tax law promised to simplify filing requirements and alleviate inequities among taxpayers. For most individuals very few benefits actually have been reaped, while certain provisions in the tax code have sewn confusion and, in some cases, provoked alarm among workers who must now spend longer hours calculating their tax returns, pay higher taxes than ever, and still worry about the possibility of finding a notice from an IRS auditor in their mailboxes. Perhaps the largest group of individuals whose record-keeping and tax reporting is now subject to potentially disastrous provisions in the new tax code is the disparate community of freelance artists in this country. And, within this group, independent media artists encounter special problems when facing the IRS. [See my article, "Breaking the Code: The Impact of the New Tax Law," on page 18 of this issue for a discussion of major changes in filing requirements affecting independent film- and videomakers.] Freelancers have not been silent about their fate at the hands of legislators, however, and Artists for Tax Equity, a recently formed coalition of artists organizations, intends to convince Congress to exempt freelance artists from the extraordinary tax burdens imposed by the 1986 Act.

On January 22 representatives of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, the Society of Illustrators, the Graphic Artists Guild, and the Foundation for the Community of Artists met at the offices of the Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts and announced their combined commitment to obtaining an exemption to the Uniform Capitalization Rules—section 263A of the tax code—on behalf of their members, as well as all other freelance artists. United under the umbrella Artists for Tax Equity—with the support of various arts organizations such as the Center for Arts Information, the New York Foundation for the Arts, and VLA—these groups will tap their members for assistance in a concerted lobbying effort, including financial support that will enable the coalition to hire a lobbyist in Washington. The first and most urgent undertaking of the group is influencing the content of the Technical Corrections Bill, which is due to be introduced in committees of both houses of Congress in February.

The Technical Corrections Bill now being prepared recapitulates attempts by the House Committee on the Budget and the Senate Finance Committee last fall to clarify some provisions in the 1986 tax act. Freelancers and sympathetic lawyers and accountants see this bill as an opportunity to separate artists from other producers of cultural materials—publishers, film studios, record companies, and the like—in relation to the complex and burdensome accounting methods apparently mandated by the tax law. Some professionals, however, believe that individual artists are not covered by the Uniform Capitalization Rules. In an article in the December 20, 1987 *New York Times* accountant Ruben Gorewitz argued, "The inventory of an artist is composed solely of creative ideas" and thus exempt from 263A, which is based on the concept of inventory of tangible properties. Unfortunately, a footnote to the published Conference Committee Report on the Tax Reform Act specifies, "For this purpose [Uniform Capitalization], tangible property includes film, sound recordings, video tapes, books, and other images, or sounds, by the creator thereof. Thus, for example, the uniform capitalization rules apply to the costs of producing a motion picture or researching or writing a book."

A Technical Corrections Bill that addressed the plight of some freelance artists was approved by the appropriate congressional committees last fall but then abandoned during the elaborate and attenuated negotiations over the Budget Reconciliation Bill passed in late December. Prior to the demise of the Technical Corrections Bill, the Authors Guild and the American Society for Magazine Photographers had hired lobbyists and convinced key legislators to include their constituents in an exemption from 263A. The bill contained the language, "The bill provides that the uniform capitalization rules do not apply to any qualified expense paid or incurred by an individual engaged in the business of being a writer or photographer in connection with such business." Artists for Tax Equity plans to obtain a similar provision in the next round of Technical Corrections legislation, but one that would cover all freelance artists. For example, in one suggested amendment to 263A, VLA proposed an exemption for expenses paid or incurred by freelance, individual "authors," based on the definition of "author" employed in U.S. copyright law that includes films and videotapes as "works of authorship."

For independent film- and videomakers an additional difficulty in convincing legislators to support an exemption from 263A results from the similarity between their work and that produced by film and television studios. The VLA amendment may provide sufficient differentiation, in so far as it would apply to "any individual if the personal efforts of such individual create (or may be reasonably expected to create) a literary, dramatic, pictorial, sculptural, choreographic, musical or other copyrightable work...." (VLA's proposed language also exempts "qualified employee-owners," that is, "any individual who is an an employee-owner of a corporation and who is an author, but only if substantially all of the stock of such corporation is owned by such individual and members of his family....") At an FIVF seminar on taxes in January, accountant Susan Lee suggested a working definition of "independent" based on production budgets, and a subsequent discussion of the newly formed AIVF Task Force on Tax Reform considered a similar ceiling that could be used as a criteria, in the range of $500,000 to $1-million.

The AIVF task force will coordinate its work with Artists for Tax Equity, with AIVF's executive director Lawrence Sapadin representing AIVF members within the coalition. The task force has mailed a letter to AIVF members alerting them to the consequences of 263A and requesting donations to support a lobbying campaign. AIVF has also contacted media arts centers and other independent media organizations to inform them about the harmful effects of Uniform Capitalization requirements on independent film and video production in this country. For more information about the mobilization to secure an exemption to 263A, contact Lawrence Sapadin, AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012; (212) 473-3400. Donations, which are deductible as a business expense, can be be sent to the same address; checks or money orders should be made out to AIVF Emergency Tax Equity Fund.

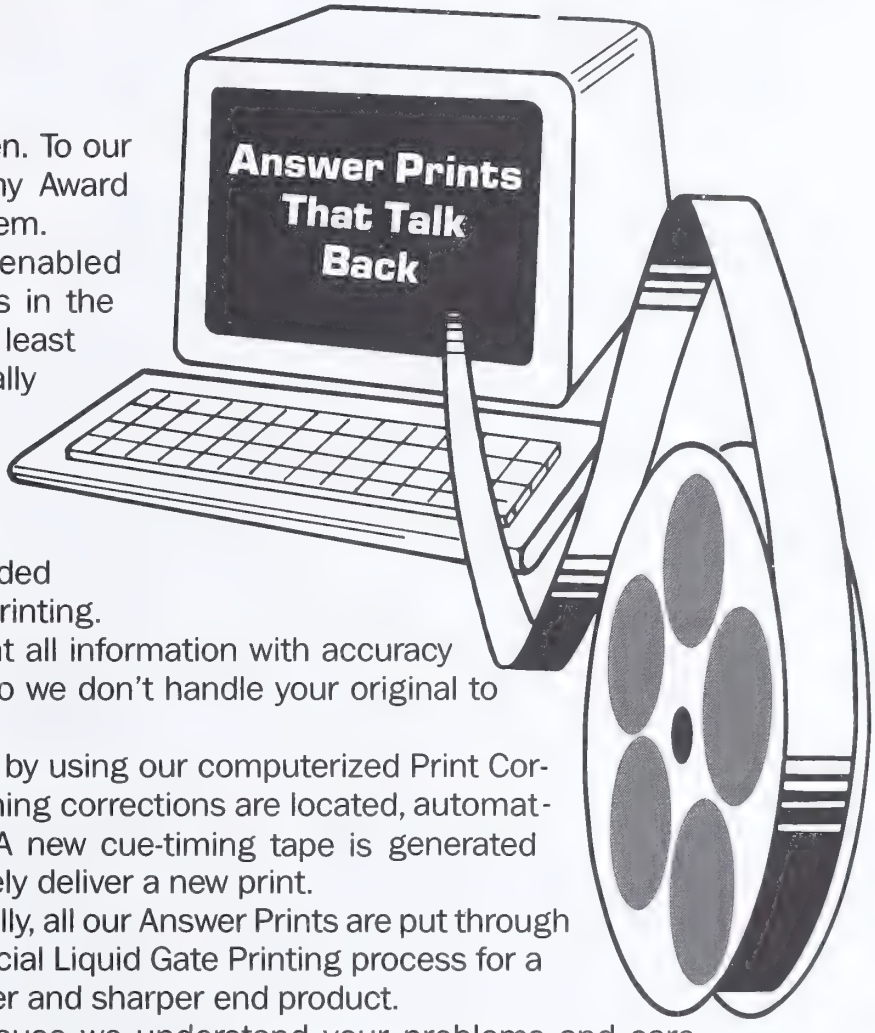
[AIVF members Wadè Black and Sara Hornbacher provided important documents and information about the effects of the 1986 Tax Reform Act on independent media artists; Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts staff attorney Katherine Rowe and tax accountant Susan Lee supplied much of the precise information about the new regulations and their repercussions. I am grateful for this assistance, although all reponsibility for accuracy is mine.]

MARTHA GEVER

CONGRESS ASSESSES PUBLIC TELEVISION'S UNDERACHIEVEMENTS

Public television recently turned 20. It was in November 1967 that Congress passed the Public Broadcasting Act, which created and initiated

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federal funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. In the Carnegie Commission on the Future of Public Broadcasting's 1978 report, *A Public Trust*, the commissioners recommended that independent producers ought to be utilized within public broadcasting in order to help achieve the kind of innovative programming envisioned by the Commission. In November 1987 independents were on Capitol Hill asking Congress to consider once again the potential value of independents to the system. The National Coalition of Public Broadcasting Producers presented specific recommendations to two congressional subcommittees for the creation of a National Independent Program Service (NIPS), a separate entity that would fund, promote, and distribute independent work for public broadcasting. This new mechanism would help increase the diversity of programming sources and work against the trend towards public broadcasting's commercialization and politicization. The Coalition's goal is to have their recommendations incorporated in an amendment to the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967.

The occasions for launching this proposal were the oversight hearings held by the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee's Communications Subcommittee on November 12 and the House Energy and Commerce and Finance Committee's Subcommittee on Telecommunications on 18. These hearings were called on public broadcasting's twentieth anniversary to assess how well it had lived up to its original promise. Describing this promise, Edward Markey (D-Massachusetts), chair of the House subcommittee, recalled E.B. White's words to the Carnegie Commission two decades ago: "Noncommercial television should address itself to the ideal of excellence, not the idea of acceptability, which is what keeps commercial television from climbing the staircase. I think television should be the visual counterpart of the literary essay, should arouse our dreams, satisfy our hunger for beauty. It should be our Lyceum and our Chatauqua, our Minsky's and our Camelot."

Included among the witnesses were independent documentary producer Loni Ding, who appeared before the Senate subcommittee, and *Eyes on the Prize* executive producer Henry Hampton before the House. John Wicklein, a former CPB program officer, current director of the Kiplinger Midcareer Program in Public Affairs Reporting at Ohio State University and frequent critic of public television, also appeared before Markey's subcommittee. However, the witness lists at both hearings were dominated by industry heavyweights, such as CPB chair Howard Gutin and president Donald Ledwig, PBS president Bruce Christensen, PBS board member Sharon Percy Rockefeller, and National Public Radio president Douglas Bennett. Called to testify about where public television now stands and where it is headed, these and other standard-bearers of public broadcasting came to the hearings with proud words of reassurance and self-congratulations. The system works, each declared in an opening statement, adding that it would work even better if Congress directed more money their way.

But the subcommittee members did not intend these hearings to be simply a back-slapping anniversary celebration nor a routine discussion of budget figures. Oversight hearings are often convened when Congress senses something is amiss. During these hearings, the subcommittee members were clearly more interested in public broadcastings' problems than its successes. "Why does public broadcasting generate so much criticism, particularly from its friends and supporters?" asked Markey. "Maybe the appropriate analogy is to a bright child with outstanding potential, but who consistently brings home Bs and Cs." These mediocre marks—hardly the level of excellence White had envisioned—were much on Markey's mind. He repeatedly referred to a number of recent critical articles that had appeared in such highly visible publications as *TV Guide*, the *New York Times*, and *Harper's*, and asked panelists to respond to accusations that public broadcasting perpetuated "the known, the safe, and the cheap," that stations managers are now regarding ratings as seriously as their commercial counterparts, that some public broadcasters feel programs like Bill Moyer's series on the Constitution are too elitist to warrant a place in the program line-up, and so on.

Public broadcasting's errant ways, as enumerated by the concerned but not unfriendly subcommittee members in their questions to the panelists, were not entirely due to the system's financial woes. Nor could they be remedied simply by increasing appropriations, despite assurances to the contrary by industry representatives. The structural problems that emerged in the course of the hearings have been spelled out many times before—the politicization of CPB board appointments, increased commercialization, the resulting dominance of noncontroversial programming, the blurring of distinctions between public TV and its new competitors, such as cable

CPB's Definition of an Independent Production

Our criteria for judging an independent production is as follows:

A. The producer has no affiliation with a public or commercial broadcasting licensee which could exercise content or fiscal control over the project.

B. The producer has control over the budget and content of the production, subject to oversight by CPB or its designee to satisfy the Corporation's mandate as stewards of federal funds, and to ensure that the production is consistent with the original proposal and meets the system's journalistic, artistic, and technical standards.

By the first criterion we mean that with regard to the production under consideration, the individual or individuals not be full, part-time or per diem employees or freelance producers of public or commercial television licensees. We realize that many independent producers may work either full or part-time for broadcast licensees as a means of supporting themselves but, to the extent that the employer exercises no control over the production being funded, we would exempt these relationships. We do not wish to see this definition preclude independents working through public television stations as long as it is their choice and they maintain the necessary control over the production.

By the second criterion, it is our intent to provide the maximum amount of freedom to the independent producer consistent with good business practice. CPB's designee, besides the Program Fund, could be PBS in the case of journalistic standards, an executive producer of one of the consortia, or an executive producer hired by CPB for a specific purpose.

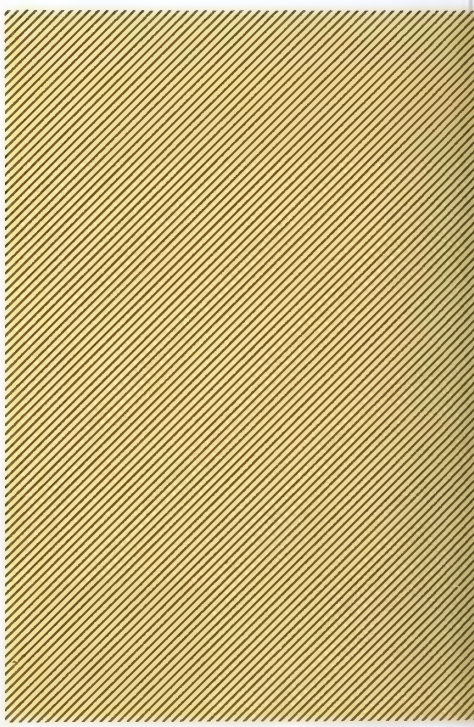
The amount of fiscal control exercised will be to ensure that the amount of money in the budget is justified, that it is spent in accordance with the agreement and for the items indicated in the budget, and that the appropriate rights are secured.

We will wish to ensure that the finished production is suitable for air and that it conforms to the description in the contract. It is not our intent to dictate the content or approach of a production but to ensure that the final work meets public broadcasting standards. Should there be an irreconcilable difference between CPB or its designee and the producer which requires a substantive change in the production, we would not consider it an independent production. As previously stated, some independent producers readily accept the guidance of an executive producer; some will consent to it only in an advisory capacity; and some may reject the idea entirely. Perhaps it should be left to the individual independent producer to determine which relationship best satisfies his or her creative needs. There must be an element of good faith in this relationship.

The definition described above is basically the one we are currently working under and it evolved from our experiences over the years.

We feel that this definition satisfies the major points articulated by both the independent community and the public television stations, but more importantly, will allow us to assure that the funds entrusted to CPB are well spent.


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Prelinger Associates, Inc. and Petrified Films, Inc. provide stock footage on film and videotape in all formats. Coverage extends from about 1915 to the present, totalling many thousands of hours, much of it in color. A significant (and growing) percentage of our footage is catalogued by computer. A library of over 300,000 historical and unusual still photographs, postcards and transparencies dating back to the teens is also available.

Unlike many other commercial film libraries, we do not specialize in news footage, features or silent entertainment films. Rather, our libraries depict American life, culture, industry and institutions and encompass a wealth of "everyday" imagery not documented by newsreels or Hollywood films. Special strengths include vintage color footage dating from the 1930s on (much of it in 35mm or 16mm first-generation original form); educational and guidance films from all eras; promotional, advertising and commercial films; consumerism; the Cold War; industrial Americana and much unusual film material, practically all unused and unseen in recent years. We specialize in providing material suitable for incorporation into electronic video graphics and computerized effects.

Recent acquisitions include a 35mm stock film library containing production-quality scenics, cityscapes and establishing shots dating from 1920 to 1970. The collection covers the world and is especially strong in aviation, sports, roadside culture, history of Hollywood and Los Angeles, streets, homes, and vintage scenes of many cities, including New York, Las Vegas, and San Francisco. There are thousands of pin-registered "process plates" originally shot for feature films, ideal for video effects today. We also represent a large library of natural history footage in color which includes thousands of animals, birds, and fish. Coverage also includes the peoples of Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, Mongolia, South America, the Arctic and the Soviet Union.

If we do not have the material you are looking for, we will be pleased to refer you to other libraries or sources that may be able to assist you.

PROCEDURES: Please call first to advise us of your needs. In most cases we can immediately tell you whether we have the footage you are seeking and, if we do, schedule a screening at our offices. If you are outside the New York area or unable to come to the library, we can prepare a "viewing cassette" for your examination. Once you have decided what you need, we will arrange to make film or videotape masters for you. *Clients are asked to review and sign our standard delivery memo prior to any delivery of footage.*

RESEARCH FEES: We charge for time spent finding, selecting and screening footage; for time spent making viewing cassettes and in preparing film for the laboratory or for video transfer. *Research charges are based on the complexity of the request and are computed at $25.00 per hour, with a minimum charge of $50.00 per project.* These charges are not normally applied to usage fees unless quantity usage is negotiated with the library. We estimate research fees prior to commencing research and advise you of our estimate at that time. *Until and unless any master film or tape materials are ordered, the research fees (and any shipping costs incurred) are your only expense.*

USAGE FEES: Clients are billed for a *non-refundable minimum project fee* upon shipment of broadcast-quality tape or film masters. Usage fees are based upon the intended markets for the production, and are computed on the amount of footage actually used in the final cut. *All minimum project fees are applied against the total usage fees due, and cannot be refunded in the event that the material is not used. DISCOUNTS FOR QUANTITY USAGE ARE NEGOTIABLE.*

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services that produce their own cultural and educational shows and purchase others from public television, while public TV stations program *Leave It to Beaver*, *The Lawrence Welk Show*, and other low-cost commercial reruns.

As Ding pointed out to the Senate subcommittee—the only witness there to "rain on their picnic," as she put it—"the steady march of public broadcasting [has been] away from its original mandate of public service, innovation, diversity, and toward proven formulas and market-driven programming that tends to safe uniformity." In measuring where broadcasting now stands and where it should be going, she continued, the bottom line is not the technology, the delivery system, or the financial problems, but the programming.

In answer to the problem of market-driven programming, Ding summarized the proposal put forth by the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers for a National Independent Program Service [see "A Place of Our Own: Independents and the Future of Public Television," *The Independent*, August/September 1987, p. 36]. The proposal calls for a new entity, with an autonomous board of directors, that would have "the unambiguous mandate to fund the production, acquisition, promotion, and distribution of programs produced by independent film and videomakers to public broadcasting and other markets." Intended to supplement the program mix now available to stations, NIPS "will help producers gain access to the national program schedule, help public broadcasting achieve its mandate to address the cultural plurality of our nation and reach out to new public television audiences." Ding also advocated regularized funding for the existing black, Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islanders, and Native American consortia.

During the House hearings, John Wicklein also advocated fundamental structural changes as opposed to a simple increase in appropriations for public broadcasting. He recommended doing away with presidential appointments to the CPB board and "the annual trek to the Hill" for appropriations, both of which "practically guarantee that improper political influences...would be exerted on programming." In their place Wicklein proposed a sustained and politically insulated funding mechanism, such as the two percent license transfer fee proposed by Senator Ernest Hollings last October, which would provide a steady source of funding for public broadcasting, and an independent public broadcasting institution, "perhaps along the lines of the Smithsonian Institution." Wicklein also recognized the critical role of independents, recommending that half the funding should be dedicated to financing and distributing independently produced programs. During the question and answer period that followed the testimony, it was a Republican, Thomas Tauke from Iowa, who pursued the reasons behind public television's under-utilization of independents. In response Wicklein outlined the concurrent decline of CPB dollars distributed directly to independent productions and the rise of funding for station consortia. In addition, he pointed to the more insidious problem of station managers' fear of offending subscribers with views contrary to their own. Programs in major series, such as *Frontline* or *WonderWorks*, that are produced by consortia of public television stations, explained Wicklein, "are considered to be safer.... I want responsibility, but not necessarily safety, because I think you need a wide range of opinions and issues discussed in public broadcasting."

What made these hearings particularly significant for independent producers was not only the inclusion of the "contentious issue of independent producers in the system," as Markey characterized it in his opening statement—although the mere fact that the utilization and concerns of independents made it onto the agenda of both Congressional subcommittees can be considered an important achievement. No less important is the national networking and organizing that went into the preparation for the hearings, which produced several significant results. First, the National Coalition's educational and lobbying efforts have brought independent film and video producers from across the country together into a united front, allowing them to speak to Congress with the clarity of a single voice and with the force of numbers. Second, the Coalition was able to raise a substantial pool of money for lobbying and educational purposes from its grassroots base. And last, independents have now proposed a concrete alternative to public television's programming mechanism and independents' role within it. All of this represents a clear step forward from previous hearings, at which independents simply requested clarification and implementation of language in a 1978 amendment to the Public Broadcasting Act that reserved a "substantial" portion of program dollars—over 50 percent, according to the bill's sponsor—for independents.

While Congress was clearly in the mood to examine the problems of public broadcasting, it remains to be seen whether and how they will act. Hollings' proposal for a license transfer fee—a subject that dominated the Senate subcommittee hearing—will undoubtedly remain the top Congressional priority within the area of public broadcasting during the next session [see "Sequels," January/February 1988]. As far as the related matter of independents and public broadcasting is concerned, Congress might press for an inter-industry resolution, as was worked out between the cable and broadcast industries regarding must-carry provisions, rather than take any legislative action. Nevertheless, the Coalition will continue to lobby for an amendment, which could be introduced anytime before or during the mark-up session following the reauthorization hearings for public broadcasting, tentatively scheduled for early spring. While no member of Congress has

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yet agreed to sponsor a bill establishing a National Independent Program Service, the situation is fluid. The Coalition admittedly faces an uphill battle, but they are encouraged by the fact that Congress has listened to their criticisms and recommendations. Further, in this decade the time has never been better to propose such changes to Congress, given the Democractic majority, the trend toward reversing the rampant deregulation of the early Reagan years, and the growing recognition that public broadcasting is becoming a loser when it choses to play by the rules of the marketplace. As Ding told the subcommittee, "That direction has to be reversed, and it takes a real intervention to do so." If the Coalition succeeds in its efforts, public broadcasting's new priorities will include a true and equal partnership with independent producers.

PATRICIA THOMSON

APPALSHOP'S PRODUCTION POOL

Appalshop, the Kentucky-based media arts center, has launched a major drive to build a $2-million permanent endowment. Interest from the endowment will finance a production fund to provide matching dollars for film, video, radio, theater, recording, exhibition, and book projects. The campaign got a boost last October, when Appalshop was awarded a $400,000 challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. They hope to reach the $2-million mark by 1991. According to Appalshop's executive director Dee Davis, production funding is a particularly acute problem in Kentucky, where scarce state dollars are limited for media projects.

Despite its relative geographic isolation from media metropolises, Appalshop has been able to generate significant activity in independent production. Early on they decided to bypass the conventional independent route of attempting to obtain airtime on the national Public Broadcasting Service, establishing instead a consortium of public TV stations in the region for regular carriage of their programs. Currently, there are a dozen films and tapes in production out of the Appalshop facility, which is set in the rural coal mining community of Whitesburg, Kentucky. "It costs a lot to produce wherever you are," says Davis, "and production money is always the hardest to raise." Therefore, Appalshop envisions the endowment as a stable source for production dollars. To raise it, they plan to take the show on the road, with a national campaign and to build a national audience for their programs.

RENEE TAJIMA

AT THE (ALTERNATIVE) MOVIES

Early 1988 may be remembered as the winter of the seven dollar movie ticket. But film audiences who resent rising prices at the commercial box office may find relief at alternative cinemas. Three longtime exhibitors of independent film and video, Philadelphia's Neighborhood Film/Video Project, New York's Collective for Living Cinema, and the New York Shakespeare Festival/Public Theater, have all reached new milestones this year.

Last month the International House of Philadelphia, home to the NF/VP, unveiled a newly renovated theater. Linda Blackaby, NF/VP's founder and director, has programmed independent works in the old Hopkinson Hall theater space since 1975. "But I realized early on, as did a lot of other people, that having a space that isn't 'marginal' is what exhibitors really need," says Blackaby. For years NF/VP screened primarily in 16mm, although they did have a set of World War II-era, portable 35mm, incandescent lamp projectors—stacked one on top of the other in a desk-sized projection booth, which required two people to operate. With renovations made possible by challenge grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, Pew Memorial Trust, and the Kresge Foundation, the new Hopkinson Hall has entered the world of twentieth century screening technology: an enlarged projection booth, new 16mm and 35mm projectors, stage and sound equipment, chairs, lobby, and a handicapped access entrance. NF/VP is now trying to raise money for video projection and completion of the ticket booth. The 1988 season kicked off in February with the premiere of *Frida, Naturaleza Viva*, by Mexican filmmaker Paul Leduc.

It was only two years ago that the Collective for Living Cinema underwent a major housing crisis. A mainstay of alternative film screening in downtown New York City, the Collective confronted padlock orders and citations from two separate divisions of the city bureaucracy, and finally had to look for a new home. One was located right across the street, in a larger space, which the Collective renovated. And this year, program director Robin Dickie has announced that the Collective will now screen an unprecedented seven days a week, beginning with its first week-long run, the premiere of Rosa von Praunheim's *Anita: Dances of Vice*. The board of directors has formed a new programming committee to implement the new expansion and is soliciting proposals for special film series for the bigger and better Collective.

Farther east in downtown Manhattan, another alternative exhibitor is celebrating its tenth anniversary. The New York Shakespeare Festival's Film at the Public program has championed "seldom-seen films" from around the world since 1978, under the direction of Fabiano Canosa and Stephen Soba. A wealth of programs—the Festival Latino of feature films from South America, the Caribbean and Spain, the annual Global Village Documentary Festival, free weekend film series, premieres and retrospectives—are screened in the 90-seat, Dolby-equipped theater where, according to Public Theater publicity, film-goers will be relieved to discover "the ticket price has remained at, and will stay, $5.00."

RT

CHANGING THE RULES AT NYSCA MEDIA

Some New York media artists were surprised to learn about changes made in the media production category in the New York State Council on the Arts' revised guidelines for 1988-89. The Media Program's revision reads, "Cable TV and radio series consisting of original programs intended as a broadcast series will no longer be considered in this category. Projects that are undertaken by an organization where there is no artist identified as the creator should apply under the Exhibition, Distribution or Special Projects categories rather than under Production." Although confusing in its presentation, the revision *does not mean* that public access series, organizations, collectives, and other production groups that regularly apply for support from NYSCA are no longer eligible for production funding. According to the Media Program staff, production groups *can still apply* but will now compete with each other, not with production proposals evaluated by the Individual Artists Program. Individual artists projects are defined as a single artist or collaboration of artists who are creators and owners of their work.

Program associate of the Media Program Jerry Lindahl explains that the new procedure for reviewing production groups separately from individual artists came about because, as a whole, they had little in common with each other, outside the fact of production itself. In addition, some groups have been funded in the Individual Artists production category year after year, while single producers have little chance of receiving repeated support. To a great extent, the production groups fell between the cracks in the program's guidelines. Says Martha Wallner, a member of the Paper Tiger TV collective, the producers of a weekly public access cable series in New York, "We never felt quite comfortable under the Individual Artists Program. They'd say, 'You've already gotten money for a production.' But we're more than one project. We do training and work with public access advocacy. Even our budget is different. We do 20 shows for the price of one. But we're also not quite a media arts center either." Wallner hopes that the change in the guidelines signals a recognition of ongoing collective production.

What is the difference between collective production and a collaboration? The new guidelines aren't that clear. A group of artists who work as a collective can still apply for Individual Artists production funds, if they meet the criteria of being artist-conceived, artist-owned projects. Lindahl recommends that anyone unsure of their status within the new guidelines call the Media Program and discuss their application with the staff. "We want to put a project wherever it'll get the best

hearing," says Lindahl, "where it will get the best chance at funding."

RT

KIM-GIBSON DEPARTS NYSCA

On the tenth anniversary of her career as a public funder, Dai Sil Kim-Gibson has decided, "It's time for a change." The outgoing director of the Media Program at the New York State Council on the Arts resigned in January to "go home to Washington, and read and write for a while." During her three years at NYSCA, Kim-Gibson encouraged reflection and new thinking in the program, tirelessly soliciting feedback and ideas from the field. Previously, Kim-Gibson served as a program officer in the Media Program at the National Endowment for the Humanities, where she championed the work of numerous independents. When first hired at NYSCA, Kim-Gibson told *The Independent*, "I've always enjoyed working with independent producers—that's been a special joy for me. They are unafraid of taking risks, they are daring in their work, and they are sensitive to the plurality and diversity of society."

RT

ALAN MITOSKY: 1934-1988

Alan Mitosky, the founder and first director of the Short Film Showcase, died of lung cancer last January. He was 53 years old. "Alan was an artist, a sculptor, and his taste and discrimination shaped the sense of quality during the beginnings of Short Film Showcase," remembers longtime friend and colleague, Sol Horwitz, who succeeded Mitosky at SFS. "His aesthetic taste was marvelous. He gave it a solid backbone. People around the country became more familiar with short film subjects as a result of the way he programmed and distributed short films—good, short films." During his long career in the arts, Mitosky, formally trained in sculpture at the University of Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts, served as curator of the Commercial Museum, and vice president of production for Madison Square Garden. At the time of his death, Mitosky was president and chief operating officer of CEL Video Services of New York.

RT

SEQUELS

Predictably, the **Fairness Doctrine** became a political football during the budget summit in December ["Sequels," October 1987]. Attached to a catch-all spending bill largely through the persistent efforts of Senator Ernest Hollings, it was eliminated in the eleventh hour as advocates backed down before White House threats of a veto. Hollings has vowed to try again.

□

However, the final spending bill retained language added at the last minute that reinstates the FCC's **affirmative action** rules giving preference to women and minorities in radio and tv station sales ["Threats to Affirmative Action in Broadcasting," April 1987].

□

On the cable regulation front, the latest and relatively lenient version of the FCC's **must-carry rules** were struck down by the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington as violating cable operators' first amendment rights ["Dawning Hopes and Sunsets for Must-Carry," June 1987]. The contested rules previously required cable systems to carry all local broadcast signals. The court, however, did not say that must-carry *per se* was unconstitutional, leaving the door open to yet another stab at revising the rules.

□

The White House has selected a nominee to the **Federal Communications Commission**. Susan Wing, a D.C. attorney, Republican, and wife of former White House lobbyist M.B. Oglesby, was chosen to fill the seat vacated by Mimi Dawson, who left the FCC for the Department of Transportation.

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Funding for the **Corporation for Public Broadcasting** has been set by Congress for fiscal year 1990 at $232.65-million—up by approximately $4-million from 1989.

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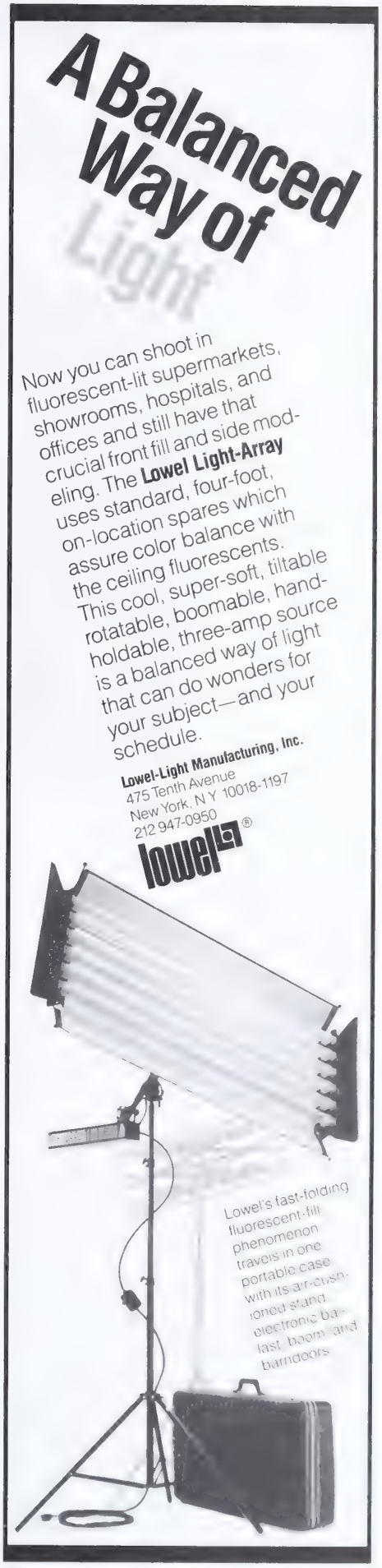
A new film coordinator has stepped into place at the Boston Fine Arts Museum. Bo Smith, who served for six years as director of film/video performances and exhibitions at Film in the Cities in St. Paul, began his new job in January. Meanwhile, Dan Minahan has taken over the job of video curator at the Kitchen in New York City.

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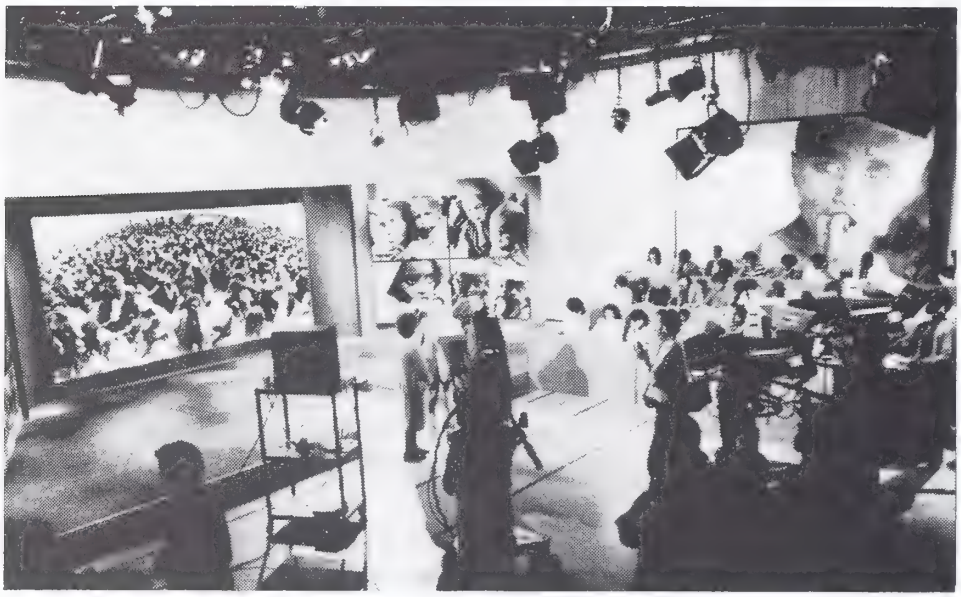
Channel Four in Britain surprised industry observers by hiring Michael Grade to replace chief executive Jeremy Isaacs ["The Half Open Door: Channel Four and Independent Production in the U.K.," October 1987]. Grade, formerly senior management at BBC-TV, at one time advocated the privatization of Channel Four, but has subsequently stated his support for its current structure whereby advertising time on Channel Four is sold by the ITV companies.

□

West African filmmakers predict that the assassination of Burkina Faso president Thomas Sankara during a coup d'etat will seriously hurt their film industry. Sankara's support and policies had allowed Burkina to develop indigenous film production, distribution companies, and the major African film festival **FESPACO** ["FESPACO Forever," July 1987].



CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION: THE 1987 FLAHERTY FILM SEMINAR



The *Live Aid* media extravaganza and television's other methods of treating the subject of famine are analyzed in Ilan Ziv and Freke Vuijst's *Consuming Hunger*.

Courtesy Maryknoll World Productions

Scott MacDonald

I first became aware of the Robert Flaherty Film Seminar some years ago when I saw Jonas Mekas' *Lost Lost Lost*. During the final reels of the film, Mekas reveals how the wounds he suffered as a result of being exiled from his native Lithuania have been healed—as fully, at least, as such traumatic wounds can be—by his involvement in an aesthetic community within which his creativity and desire to take political action have found personal and artistic support. The central event of the final reel of that film is called "Flaherty Newsreel." It recounts an aesthetic "guerilla action" taken by Mekas, Tony Conrad, and Ken and Flo Jacobs in 1965: they travel to Vermont to attempt an invasion of the Flaherty Seminar on behalf of Jack Smith's *Flaming Creatures* and Ken Jacobs' *Blonde Cobra*. Not allowed into the seminar, they sleep outside in the cold night (a wry allusion to Flaherty's *Nanook of the North*) and the next morning commemorate their rejection with some ritual filmmaking. Since first seeing *Lost Lost Lost*, I have regularly heard about the Flaherty Seminar. From time to time, rumors of confrontations between filmmakers, critics, and audiences at the annual gathering have come to my attention. But, for a long time, I assumed that these gatherings were devoted to documentary filmmaking and that an invitation was necessary to attend.

In fact, the Flaherty Seminars have been held annually since 1954—three years after Flaherty's death—when Flaherty's widow, Frances Flaherty, invited a small group of filmmakers and students to the Flaherty farm in Dummerston, Vermont to look at Flaherty's films, and to discuss Flaherty's vision and their own work. Through 1958 the seminars continued to be held at the Flaherty farm, and until 1957 they were administered by the Robert Flaherty Foundation. In 1960 International Film Seminars was founded to take charge of the seminars, which from 1959 on have been held in a variety of locations, mostly in the Northeast, and for the past three years at Wells College in central New York State. While each Flaherty Seminar includes a number of invited guests, participation is open to the public. Altogether the seminar hosts around 100 participants: filmmakers, scholars and critics, exhibitors, distributors, and interested people from other fields.

The earliest seminars used Flaherty's films as a catalyst for discussing more recent developments, but for the past 20 years screenings have included many types of documentary and avant-garde film as well. The list of filmmaker-guests who have visited the seminars comprises a who's who of contemporary cinema: Louis Malle, Satyajit Ray, Jean Rouch, Marcel Ophuls, Michael Snow, Hans Richter, Jonas Mekas, Bruce Conner, Frederick Wiseman, Alain Tanner, Agnes Varda, Robert Gardner, and Trinh T. Minh-ha among them. Seminar events are programmed by distinguished independent exhibitors and scholars from around the country. Normally the programmers arrange screenings and discussions morning, afternoon, and evening, for one week. Mid-week, a free morning allows participants to rest.

The seminar is usually held in mid-to-late August, and I attended for the first time last summer. It was a powerful and strange experience, no doubt due to my double status both as a regular, paying participant and as an informal representative for Peter Watkins' film *The Journey*, which was programmed as part of the seminar. (I was coproducer of the sections of *The Journey* that were shot in upstate New York.) As a result, I cannot claim that the following account will be "objective"—although I doubt that term has much relevance at a Flaherty Seminar anyway, even if it does have meaning in other situations. The experience of this, and I'm sure of any,

Flaherty Seminar was complex , but I am left with two general reactions: one has to do with the overall programming of this year's seminar, the other, with the way in which *The Journey* revealed crucial elements of the seminar's structure.

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One of the tragedies of recent film history is the failure of exhibitors to find ways of attracting audiences to a variety of filmic forms. As a result, it is easy to forget that film is not simply a subject or a set of cultural facts, but that it is an ongoing discourse within which noncommercial forms of cinema engage with commercial forms. For the most part, however, the recent history of film exhibition has been characterized by fixed categories of presentation. There are theaters that show first-run commercial films, theaters in some cities that present foreign language commercial releases, a network of small screening rooms in a few cities and at some universities and art museums that program avant-garde films, and here and there a museum which periodically focuses on animation, ethnographic documentary, or some other form. College teachers routinely accept this procedure, for the most part exposing students to carefully delineated types of cinema within any given course.

This situation has become so normalized that we may forget that creative alternatives are possible. From 1925 to 1939 the London Film Society (under the leadership of Iris Barry) regularly presented film programs that allowed audiences access to a very broad spectrum of cinema—science films, classic features, avant-garde works, animation, political documentaries. The London society was the prototype for a network of film societies throughout Great Britain and Europe. On this continent similar work was done by Amos Vogel, whose Cinema 16 presented eclectic, dialectically structured programs to surprisingly large audiences from 1947 to 1963.

In recent years, there have been few opportunities for film audiences to experience such variety. At the Flaherty Seminar, however, creative programming is not at all unusual, as demonstrated by Richard Herskowitz, the director of Cornell Cinema in Ithaca, New York, who served as this year's programmer. He approached the seminar, as previous programmers have, as an arena within which to develop a complex, energetic discourse. Like the monthly programs at Cinema 16, Herskowitz' program can be regarded as a single, "edited" film, a "mega-film" that reveals his sense of some of the crucial recent developments in western cinema. (At one time, Herskowitz worked as Vogel's teaching assistant, and as a special project he collected the Cinema 16 programs and program notes.)

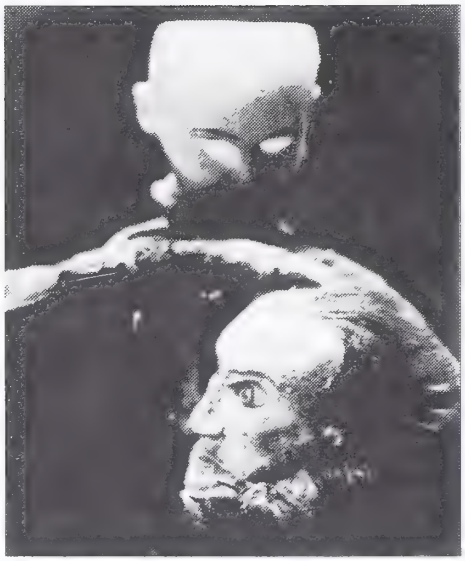
Altogether, 25 films and 26 videotapes were screened. Herskowitz' selections were arranged so that several structural elements were pronounced. The most obvious and least important was the use of opening and concluding presentations to "frame" the seminar. The first session on Sunday morning presented several videos to introduce a broad critique of mass media: Philip Mallory Jones' *Ghosts and Demons* and *Contemplation,* Peer Bode's *Animal Migrations,* and *Open the Box: Part of the Furniture,* produced by Michael Jackson at Britain's Channel Four. These tapes and all the films and videos selected by Herskowitz exposed conventional media practices and attempted to demonstrate, or suggest, progressive alternatives. That afternoon's session had an introductory quality as well. Herskowitz presented several animations: Hubert Sieleicki's *Festival,* Robert Ascher's *Cycle,* Emily Breer's *Fluke* and *Spiral,* and the Quay Brothers' *Street of Crocodiles. Festival* is a satire of the film festival experience, particularly of the types of human interaction Sieleicki sees as typical at festivals. Herskowitz' inclusion of the film at this point was a comment on the elaborate introduction of staff and participants which immediately preceded the screening, a Flaherty Seminar tradition. As a group, these films revealed a variety of ways in which animation can embody cultural elements not ordinarily the subjects of conventional animation or of mainstream media in general. According to Herskowitz, this grouping was partially "a response to previous Flaherty Seminars' use of animated films as 'shorts' that no one ever discussed." Of course, the films' function as introductory material was reminiscent of the once-standard practice of preceding feature presentations with animated cartoons. The seminar concluded with David Daniels' *Buzz Box* and *A Golpes de Corazon* (*Blows of the Heart*), from Nicaragua's SSTV—two tapes also critical of commercial media: the first satirizes high-tech methods, and the second reveals potential alternative uses of technology.

The second structuring principle of the seminar was Herskowitz' decision to arrange the remaining sessions so that, like the animation program, the individual films in each session and the individual sessions, too, reverberated formally and thematically with each other. On Monday morning, for example, seminar participants saw Alfred Guzzetti's *Beginning Pieces* and Alan Berliner's *The Family Album*, followed by a discussion with the filmmakers. Such public exchanges with film- and videomakers are standard at Flaherty Seminars, as are informal talks during meals and other activities. In an essay he is writing for a Flaherty *Programmer's Manual,* Jack Churchill explains, "It is the [filmmaker] 'guests,' as much as anyone for whom we do the seminar. It is the guests' interaction with each other as well as with the participants that makes the experience exciting for them." In fact, according to Churchill, "A number of people have not only shown unfinished works, but have credited the seminar with helping them complete their pieces."

Beginning Pieces uses cinema verité techniques to create a haunting account of Guzzetti's young daughter and her friends. *The Family Album* recycles portions of Berliner's collection of 16mm home movies and audiotapes to create a sense of how some American families created images of their lives during a 30-year period. The pairing of these films allowed viewers to contrast several different approaches to recording and interpreting family life: Guzzetti filmed his own material, in color and sync sound, whereas Berliner recut black and white found footage and developed a complex interplay between imagery and found sound. Both films, however, share a poignant sense of the process of aging, and both differ significantly from the conventional home movies that provided the raw material for Berliner's film.

The Monday afternoon session featured *De Peliculas,* a film-in-progress by Pennee Bender, DeeDee Halleck, and Robert Summers and *From the Pole to the Equator*, by Italians Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci Lucchi—two films that also reinterpret material recorded by others. In these two cases, however, these processes are used for obvious political purposes. *De Peliculas* attempts to expose the history of U.S. imperial exploitation in Central America, as revealed in Hollywood newsreels and dramatic films. From what I could tell, the inclusion of this one unfinished film was meant as a gesture of support for the filmmakers and as a potential forum that might facilitate completion of the film. *From the Pole to the Equator* restores and redefines footage shot by Luca Comerio, the first important Italian cinematographer (and a fascist who hoped to develop the kind of relationship with the Mussolini government that Leni Riefenstahl subsequently had with the Nazis). His turn-of-the-century footage of big game hunting and of cultures in Asia, the Near East, and Africa is both magnificent—especially as we see it rephotographed and hand-painted by Gianikian and Ricci Lucchi—and terrifying in its macho/imperialist implications.

The political themes evident in the afternoon session were reconfirmed that evening in a video presentation of an episode from the widely-seen public television series *The Africans*, and again, during Tuesday's sessions. Tuesday began with a presentation of *Miske-en*, by Linda Karpell, and the first two sections of the three-part *Consuming Hunger*, by Ilan Ziv and Freke Vuijst. Ziv and Vuijst's exposé of the media's condescending treatment and commercial marketing of starving Africans was nicely complemented by Karpell's respectful meditation on an African village that is home to refugees from famine stricken areas. Following the discussion, Herskowitz presented Chris Shepard and Claude Sauvageot's *With These Hands: How Women Feed Africa*, a fascinating cross-cultural examination of women's struggle for recognition, respect, and opportunity in several African villages. The Tuesday afternoon session paired two films that examine recent government violence in minority communities, *The Bombing of Osage Avenue*, produced by Louis Massiah, and the London-based Black



A malevolent doll seizes the puppet-protagonist in *Street of Crocodiles*, by the Brothers Quay. A feature-length selection of their films was among the animations included in the week-long Flaherty seminar.

Courtesy Film Forum

Audio Collective's *Handsworth Songs*. The day concluded with two more selections from Channel Four, Darcus Howe's *Bandung File: Haiti the Unfinished Revolution* and *Taken for a Ride: Right to Reply*. In the first, the Haitian-British producer talks to native Haitians about their revolution. In the second, a representative of an Indian group responds to allegations made about them in a previous Channel Four program.

Thursday was—as Su Friedrich later wrote in a letter to Herskowitz—"gay day." The morning's films were Friedrich's *The Ties That Bind* and *Damned If You Don't*, followed by Ron Peck's *What Can I Do with a Male Nude*. In *The Ties That Bind* Friedrich interviews her mother about her experiences as a young woman growing up in Germany in the 1930s. *Damned If You Don't* uses the story of the seduction of a nun by another woman as a means of calling for a reappropriation of pleasure by feminist cinema. The afternoon session began with Marc Heustis and Wendy Dallas' *Chuck Solomon: Coming of Age*, a documentary about Solomon's experiences with AIDS, and concluded with three tapes by John Greyson, *The ADS Epidemic*, *The Kipling Trilogy*, and *Moscow Does Not Believe in Queers*. This turned out to be one of the seminar's most controversial presentation because of Greyson's use of gay pornography clips, with some audience members protesting what they deemed his lack of commitment to safe sex. A noticeable number of seminar participants and staff simply absented themselves for the discussion with Greyson. On Thursday evening film historian Mark Langer introduced and led a discussion on the Flaherty-Murnau collaboration *Tabu* (according to Herskowitz, *Tabu* is noted for its repressed gay content). The day ended with a screening of Flaherty's *Moana*, an earlier South Seas fiction made with native islanders.

The following morning's program centered on fiction experiments by accomplished documentarians. Deanna Kamiel's mini-documentary *Mickey's Diner* and her humorous narrative *Maggie and the Men of Minnesota* were paired with Stevenson Palfi's *Don't Start Me to Talking*. Friday ended with films by Pamela Yates—*Who Are the Contras, I'll Vote On, We're Not Gonna Take It*—and Tami Gold's *Prescription for Change* (a collaboration with Lyn Goldfarb) and *Looking for Love—Teenage Parents*, made specifically to aid particular groups in organizing social action.

The third major element of Herskowitz' structural design of the seminar was his decision to develop three distinct strands of film, video, and discussion woven in and out of the presentations. The first of these strands consisted of the Channel Four programming that peppered the week. Channel Four broadcasts programs from a variety of sources: *Street of Crocodiles* and *Consuming Hunger*, for example, were commissioned from individuals; *Bandung File* and *Open the Box* are series produced by the channel; *Handsworth Songs* was made by a workshop collective and acquired by Channel Four; and *Da Silva, Da Silva*, an experimental narrative shown Wednesday afternoon, was produced by the group that makes *Bandung File*. As a motif, these Channel Four programs demonstrated the aesthetic and ethnic diversity possible when a broadcasting system supports independent work. At the same time, the conventional format, mood, and iconography of some of these shows raised interesting questions about the degree to which conventional structure negates innovative content.

A selective retrospective of films by Dutch independent Johan Van Der Keuken formed another strand. Seven of his films were presented: *The Reading Lesson* (1973), *Hermann Slobbe/Blind Child 2* (1966), *A Film For Lucebert* (1967), *Filmmaker's Holiday* (1974), *The White Castle* (1973), *Time* (1984), and *The Way South* (1981). Screened at various times throughout the week, Van Der Keuken's films were the subjects of two formal discussions, and Van Der Keuken was present throughout the seminar. Herskowitz' decision to focus on this filmmaker was, no doubt, a function of Van Der Keuken's tendency to move from one culture and subculture to another in cinematic forms that emphasize the ability of films, and a filmmaker's career, to bridge cultural gaps. Within the seminar program, Van Der Keuken's use of home movies and sequences from his earlier films in *Filmmaker's Holiday* interfaced with *The Family Album* and *Beginning Pieces*, as well as with *De Peliculas* and *From the Pole to the Equator*. His interview with the imaginative blind child Hermann Slobbe followed the animations. Like them, Van Der Keuken's live action film attempts to reveal invisible psychic and cultural realities. *The Way South* was presented just before Gold's and Yates' organizing films, an appropriate choice since *The Way South* moves from one country to another (Holland, France, Italy, Egypt), focusing each time on people whose often painful experiences at the hands of governments have given them a special insight into the political culture of the nation where they're currently living—and, in many cases, the need for effective, organized social action.

The third strand was Peter Watkins' 14-and-a half-hour *The Journey*, a film coordinated, directed, and edited by Watkins, but shot in collaboration with groups of people (most of them not professional filmmakers) in 12 countries: the U.S. (three locations, including the Mohawk Valley, not far from Wells College), Canada, Mexico, the Soviet Union, Germany, France, Norway, Scotland, Mozambique, Australia, Japan, and Polynesia. Like Van Der Keuken's work, the 19 sections of *The Journey* were presented at various times during the first five days of the seminar, functioning both as an addition to the seminar's broad exploration of media forms and as a way of developing useful thematic and formal interconnections with other presentations. For example, *The Journey*'s continual assertion of the relationship between the international arms race and world hunger intersected with Karpell's *Miskeen*, Vuijst and Ziv's *Consuming Hunger*, and Daniels' *Buzz Box*. Its extensive critique of the way in which the TV news handled the Mulroney-Reagan "Shamrock Summit" of 1985 complemented *Consuming Hunger*'s expose of the media manipulation of starving people, as well as observations voiced in *Bandung File: Haiti the Unfinished Revolution* and *Open the Box*. *The Journey*'s discussions with Polynesians about their troubled economy interfaced with Flaherty and Murnau's romantic *Tabu*. *The Journey*'s use of extensive interviews with working-class people echoed Massiah's interviews with Philadelphia residents in *The Bombing of Osage Avenue*, interviews with Chuck Solomon's friends in *Chuck Solomon: Coming of Age*, with the African women in *With These Hands: How Women Feed Africa*, and with the subjects of Gold's and Yates' films. Watkins' decision to move from country to country, to see the world as a single, interlocking set of social and economic systems recalled Van Der Keuken's travels from country to country in *The Way South*, Berliner's formal *Everywhere at Once*, and other filmmakers' journeys outside their own cultures in other work presented during the seminar.

All in all, Herskowitz' programming developed a fascinating fabric of relationships which ultimately became so complex, so dense that the implications were only beginning to register at the end of the week. I know of no more remarkable

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instance of creative programming in recent years. I heard a complaint that the seminar was "over-programmed," that there were too many films and not enough time for discussion. But, for me, the discourse *of* the films was far more useful than the group discussions *about* the films, which in many cases I found rather predictable.

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Inevitably, the process of a Flaherty Seminar, or of any intensive week-long conference, produces emotional hills and valleys. From the point of view of the audience as a collective entity there are sure to be programming triumphs and disasters, "hot" and "cold" discussions. A group dynamic will always occur in such situations: friendliness and excitement reign at first, but as the seminar wears on and people reveal their ideological colors (and as their mannerisms become familiar) clashes are inevitable. In some cases, these clashes provide productive bases for understanding; in others, they establish barriers that remain for the duration of the event. At times, group process overcomes individual dynamics and creates a temporary "group mood." Early in the week someone mentioned to me that "on one evening, every year, somebody always gets it" from the group. I have no way of knowing whether such a statement is accurate, but I remembered the comment on Wednesday evening when *The Journey* "got it."

The question and answer session lasted for more than two hours. Legitimate concerns were raised, and, for the most part, these were the same questions raised in connection with other films at the seminar: some thought that *The Journey*'s focus on conventional families (mother, father, children) was adulatory and nonrepresentative; others voiced concern that Watkins' narration represented a traditional, paternal, implicitly imperialist voice; some were concerned that Watkins had badgered his interviewees; and some complained that the film was too repetitive. From my vantage point as one of eight representatives of the film facing the audience, the discomfort of this session came not from the questions asked but from the almost palpable anger expressed by some and repeated during the following days when negative comments about Watkins and *The Journey* were used to compliment other films. Interestingly, the anger engendered by *The Journey*'s length and its slow, relentless pace revealed dimensions of the Flaherty Seminar that the other films at the seminar did not.

On one level, the seminar is the epitome of a progressive institution. One would be hard-pressed to find a group of people more alert to world problems and the ways in which the media have positioned themselves in regard to these problems. But, like most institutions, the seminar can be said to be conservative. Those of us who pay to attend (and perhaps the invited guests, as well) think of it as a pleasant kind of work, a way to energize ourselves, form some useful networks, and keep abreast of our professional fields.



Peter Watkins (with microphone) and collaborators shooting a section of *The Journey* in upstate New York. The 14-and-a-half-hour film was screened in its entirety at the Flaherty Film Seminar.

Photo: Sylvia de Swaan

But if aliens—or members of another social class—were to drop from the sky and observe the proceedings, my guess is that they'd have difficulty understanding how what we were doing would qualify as "work."

Flaherty days begin with an impressive breakfast bar (the quality of food served at Wells was generally excellent, the best "institutional food" I remember), followed by films and tapes chosen specifically to interest us and discussions with affable, thoughtful colleagues, followed by a delicious lunch, more screenings and discussion, followed by an excellent dinner (complete with a choice of imported beers), followed by more screenings and discussion and, at the end of each day, by an informal party. We know we are seeing some of the best new film and video works available—before almost anyone else has a chance to see them. We are able to hang out with the directors and producers. And to top it off, these events take place in a beautiful setting, on the banks of Cayuga Lake, which offers a refreshing respite from cinematic pleasures during the day and late at night.

More fundamental to the Flaherty Seminar than the selections of a particular programmer is its rigorous schedule.What happens within the week is carefully regulated so that the basic rhythm of meals, screenings, discussion never falters. In other words, although the political views of those who attend the seminar are different from those implied in an hour of commercial TV, or at a business convention, the structuring of time at the seminar is maintained to ensure maximum opportunities for consumption (of film, of food, of interesting conversation) in a physical and ideological setting in which liberal guilt is minimized. Ultimately, the effect of this schedule's tyranny is an implicit affirmation of the status quo, the same status quo confirmed by the rigorously controlled time structures of the popular media, schools, and nearly all other institutions.

The Journey is, and means to be, an intervention into the time structures of contemporary culture. In Watkins' view, the global situation is deteriorating, and, therefore, all complacency must be confronted, including the "well-earned" complacency of those (including Watkins) in deepest sympathy with the people whose lives are directly affected by this deterioration. I'd guess that Watkins and the thousands of people around the world who contributed to his experiment in international collaboration would be delighted with the work screened at the seminar. The point of *The Journey* is not to compete with these fine films, but to open up a new communicative and conceptual space where we can consider, more fully than we normally do, whether even these films will be able to slow the commodifying tendencies of modern culture and the expanding arms race that "protects" these tendencies—once they are fed into the carefully controlled time structures of contemporary media institutions.

My guess is that the seminar participants' annoyance with *The Journey* was not so different from the annoyance of my beginning film students when I confront them with a single-shot Larry Gottheim film, Michael Snow's *Wavelength,* or Chantal Akerman's *Jeanne Dielman....* They attend my course for pleasure (or pleasurable enlightenment), never dreaming that the psychic rhythms they've developed for maximizing pleasure and the consumption of information will be challenged and questioned. (I don't mean to be patronizing. I've experienced such annoyance regularly all my life.)

Thanks to Herskowitz and the filmmakers whose work he programmed, those of us who attended this year's Flaherty Seminar became more aware of some of the problems contemporary media artists encounter and better able to critique the films and tapes that attempt to reveal these problems. But our increased awareness was achieved in a physical/temporal setting which may implicitly discourage our willingness to ameliorate these problems. That this is the case is suggested by the fact that despite widespread outrage among us about the refusal of the Public Broadcasting Service to air Heustis and Dallas' *Chuck Solomon: Coming of Age,* and despite interest expressed in sending a letter on behalf of the Flaherty Seminar to protest this outrage, no letter was ever written, signed, or sent by the seminar. We were too busy critiquing the next film.

Scott MacDonald is a teacher and writer whose articles on alternative cinema and interviews with filmmakers regularly appear in Film Quarterly, Afterimage, *and elsewhere.*

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BREAKING THE CODE: THE IMPACT OF THE NEW TAX LAW

Martha Gever

[Author's note: This article is presented only for the purpose of educating independent film- and videomakers and is not to be taken as financial or legal advice.]

With the deadline for filing income tax returns for 1987 at hand, the full weight of certain provisions in the so-called Tax Reform Act, passed by Congress in 1986, will soon fall on all freelance artists. Most of the relevant changes in the tax code are contained in the section on Uniform Capitalization Rules, otherwise known as section 263A, which redefines entire categories of deductions that film and video professionals have relied upon. On January 6, the Foundation for Independent Video and Film sponsored a seminar where accountants Susan Lee and Cecil Feldman outlined aspects of the federal income tax code that affect independent film- and videomakers. Unfortunately, as both accountants repeatedly stressed, the IRS regulations governing Uniform Capitalization are insufficient at present, and the IRS is not expected to issue more complete guidelines in time for filing 1987 tax returns. This article summarizes Lee and Feldman's commentary on the Uniform Capitalization Rules and related issues, and what follows should be interpreted in light of their warnings that uncertainty may reign for some time in the realm of the new tax code. For an overview of the 1986 tax act and its various repercussions, see "Stress Factors: Understanding the New Tax Law," by Bérénice Reynaud, *The Independent*, March 1987, pp. 8-13. For a discussion of tax requirements for not-for-profit corporations, see "Commercial Breaks: Profits, Nonprofits, Taxes," by Paula R. Schaap, *The Independent*, October 1985, pp. 14-15. And for a report on organized efforts to exempt independent film- and videomakers from the Uniform Capitalization Rules, see "Artists Act to Reform Tax Reform Act," on page four of this issue.

"The theory behind 263A," Susan Lee explained, "is that you should not deduct expenses for things you haven't sold." In other words, the cost of film stock for a project cannot be deducted unless the project has made money, whether in the form of a grant or income from distribution. The more profound effect of Uniform Capitalization, however, is that now indirect costs, overhead expenses, must be assigned to specific projects and, like other expenses, may only be deducted from income from those projects. The costs of office supplies entailed in writing a script that may eventually garner some income as a completed film or tape, for example, cannot be deducted as a business expense until that film or tape generates income. Previously, overhead costs for maintaining a freelance business could be deducted from income from other paid work, such as teaching, but now these costs must be allocated project-by-project and can only be deducted accordingly. Furthermore, the IRS now requires that separate records be kept for each project.

Production costs for motion pictures have been covered by capitalization requirements since 1976, Lee pointed out, and she described the income forecast accounting method that has been used to calculate deductions for film and video projects. Income forecast means that the expenses of producing a film must be deducted over the life of the income stream of the film. Lee outlined the formula used to calculate deductible costs using income forecast:

$$\frac{\text{present year income}}{\text{projected income}} \times \text{project costs (direct and indirect)} = \text{current year deduction}$$

The new tax code says that "income forecast is repealed," Lee noted. But, because the precise requirements of Uniform Capitalization have not yet been spelled out by the IRS, Lee said that income forecast may still be the appropriate method for film- and videomakers. Although the exact amount of income forecast for a particular project is always speculative, she counselled producers to project a profit, but not a very big one. "If you're wrong," she said, "you can adjust your wrong estimate a few years down the road."

For those who have used the income forecast method to calculate their taxes, an additional accounting morass has been created by the requirement that indirect costs deducted in the past for ongoing projects now must be allocated to those projects, and the deductions taken for those costs must be repaid retroactively over the next four years. For those who have not used the income forecast method to expense the costs of their film or video projects, the scenario is even more bleak. They will now have to recapture both direct and indirect costs for those projects that have not been abandoned. "I know that some of you have been taking losses, and those losses are going to have to be recaptured because those losses were taken in regard to projects that have not completed their income stream," Lee commented, adding, "The accounting burden for this is enormous." She mentioned that the only costs not subject to the Uniform Capitalization Rule are marketing, selling, advertising, and distribution expenses.

An additional set of questions concerning the new tax law relates to the two accounting methods used for business records: cash and accrual. "The cash method is keeping records according to when you get it and when you spend it. Accrual is when you bill it and when you get billed," Lee explained. Film- and videomakers must now take notice of the difference because "Uniform Capitalization has converted a whole class of assets into something called inventory. And all inventory has to be accounted for using an accrual method." (For example, a videotape made 10 years ago that is still in active distribution is considered an asset and now also must be counted as part of the videomaker's inventory.) Her guess is that calculations of income forecasts for most independent film- and videomakers using the cash method hardly differ from those done with the accrual method. And, Lee cautioned, "If you switch from cash to accrual, you can't switch back without permission from the IRS." According to the January 20 edition of the *Wall Street Journal*, the fee for accounting method changes can be up to $150.

With a few reservations, Lee also said that a film or tape that has produced and will produce no income can still be abandoned—declared "worthless"—and the cost of the work deducted. "I believe that you can take the deduction if there's no income and if you can overcome the offensiveness of declaring your film worthless," she stated. This tactic, she readily pointed out, functions as a red flag and may precipitate an audit. The IRS can demand proof that the work has no possibility of producing income in the future, that it was available, and that the producer has a reasonable explanation of why the work will not produce further, if any, income. She added that a worthless deduction can only be taken if the income forecast method is applied and cautioned that nothing in 263A explicitly allows deductions for work that has been abandoned.

Lee and Feldman also noted other changes in the tax code that independent media artists should be aware of: no more tax shelters, no more investment tax credits, and a new ruling that says a freelance business must make a profit three years

out of five, instead of two out of five as in the past. The latter may be not be iron clad, Lee said, citing previous exceptions that recognized an artist's professional status despite the absence of any profit. Finally, Lee pointed out that certain independent film- and videomakers may firmly believe that the Uniform Capitalization Rules do not apply to their particular circumstances. If that is the case, she advised that they include a note to that effect with their tax returns in order to try to prevent negligence penalties levied by the IRS.

While Feldman's participation in the seminar concentrated on various categories of deductible expenses common among freelancers—home office, travel, entertainment, etc.—he also made several observations about Uniform Capitalization. "The IRS is trying to fit the round peg of freelance work into the square hole of industrial accounting methods, and the accounting cost for freelancers is prohibitive. In order to get Congress to recognize this, there's going to have to be a wail of protest against 263A."

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SLEUTH

THE SEARCH FOR TELEVISION NEWS FOOTAGE



Freedom Riders John Lewis and Jim Zwerg after being beaten by a mob in Montgomery, Alabama in 1961. From "Ain't Scared of Your Jails: 1960-1961," in Blackside, Inc.'s Civil Rights series, *Eyes on the Prize.*

Photo: *Nashville Tennessean*

Patricia Thomson

When Turner Home Video Entertainment and MPI Home Video both released half-inch videotapes of highlights from Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North's testimony in the Iran-contra hearings, producer Ernie Urvater had had enough. Thinking that "unadulterated Ollie North testimony was more propaganda for Ollie North," Urvater set out to produce a documentary that examined the hearings in a critical fashion. He planned to hold a debate on one of the college campuses in Amherst, Massachusetts, using a panel of scholars who would analyze segments of the testimony. The whole process would be recorded, televised, and cassettes sold to the educational market. But Urvater's plan never got off the ground. The stumbling block was obtaining footage from the Congressional hearings. Urvater approached the half dozen news organizations that taped the hearings and was either bluntly told the footage was not for sale or found that the licensing fees far exceeded his means—between $9,000 to $18,000 for 10 minutes. "Generally, there's no access of independent producers to the news of our country," Urvater concluded. "In a democratic society, one can freely quote the news from the *New York Times*. Can documentary film- or videomakers freely quote from the video record of the news? The answer is no. That is privately owned," says Urvater, "and owned with a vengeance."

Independents have not been the only ones to chafe at the degree of control retained by news organizations over their "property." In a well-known copyright infringement case brought by CBS against the Television News Archives at Vanderbilt University in 1973, Vanderbilt argued fervently for the right to maintain a video record of the three networks' nightly newscasts for use by researchers and scholars. Such unlikely allies as Patrick Buchanan and other conservatives rallied to their cause. The nonprofit archive felt they provided an important public service, particularly since CBS, NBC, and ABC not only had no news libraries accessible to the public at that time, but also they kept no copies whatsoever of whole newscasts. In a motion to the court Vanderbilt argued,

> Claim of copyright...cannot stand because of the free speech and free press clauses of the First Amendment.... The speech presented on the *CBS Evening News with Walter Cronkite* is not merely the speech of CBS or of Walter Cronkite; it is the speech of Presidents, senators, congressmen, governors, and other citizens—speech which exercises a vital influence on the lives of all Americans, and which is, indeed, "the essence of self-government."

The U.S. district court never ruled on *CBS v. Vanderbilt*. CBS dropped the case when Tennessee Senator Howard Baker succeeded in including language in the revised copyright law of 1976 permitting libraries and archives to reproduce and distribute audiovisual news programs for research purposes. Still, a decision in Vanderbilt's favor would not have altered the basic fact that news programs are the property of new organizations. While news—like ideas, theories, and historical incidents—cannot be copyrighted, news *stories*—that is, a print or broadcast news organization's presentation of a news event—can be. The networks have done so regularly since the mid-1970s, and most local stations have followed suit. Therefore



The 188-hour Army-McCarthy hearings, broadcast by CBS in 1954, became the raw material for Emile de Antonio and Daniel Talbot's *Point of Order!*

Courtesy New Yorker Films

any independent film or video producer wanting access to TV news images must obtain permission from the organization itself or an archive that licenses television and theatrical rights for the collections it holds. (Many institutions housing copyrighted television news programs, such as the Museum of Broadcasting and the National Archives, make them available for viewing only.) While taping off-air is of course technically feasible, legally this is permitted only in circumstances covered by the "fair use" clause of the 1976 Copyrights Act. This limitation on copyright protection allows restricted use of copyrighted material without permission for "criticism, comment, news, reporting, teaching (including multiple copies for classroom use), scholarship, or research." Although few disputes over "fair use" of broadcast news actually have been tried in court, television news organizations have demonstrated a strong protective instinct towards their material and have threatened and, in some cases, filed suit against those who use it without permission.

But, as Urvater discovered, the license fees charged by the major television news archives—CBS News Archive, NBC News Video Archive, and Sherman Grinberg Film Libraries (which handles all sales for ABC News, and lists U.S. Pathé and Paramount Newsreels among their other collections)—are hefty and can fast empty an independent producer's pocket. "I went into Grinberg and choked," says Jacki Ochs, who was seeking archival footage for *Vietnam: The Secret Agent*. Besides hourly fees for using the facilities, librarian services, and the duplication costs, there are the licensing fees: per minute, they ordinarily run $1,500-$2,700 for theatrical rights, $540-1,440 for public television, and $600-1,440 for home video.

Network footage may be exactly what's needed in a given production, in which case one generally must pay the price. But for many, the networks and their archives aren't the only game in town. Prior to the networks were the newsreel companies. They remain an important historical source for producers and researchers, who often turn to two of the largest newsreel houses, Fox Movietone News (portions of its collection has been moved to the University of South Carolina) and Hearst Metrotone News (which in recent years donated most of its holdings to the University of California, Los Angeles Film and Television Archives). Other newsreel collections can be found both in public nonprofit libraries, such as Universal News housed in the National Archives, and in commerical libraries, such as the Kinogram Newsreel and Telenews collections held by John E. Allen, Inc. and the British Pathé collection owned by Worldwide Television News.

Researchers pursuing more recent footage of national and international stories who are also seeking an alternative to the network archives can turn to other news organizations, such as Worldwide Television News (formerly United Press International Television News) and Christian Science Monitor Broadcast Services, which syndicate their news stories to independent broadcast stations and cable program services. While the Christian Science Monitor has only recently begun to develop a system for saving and licensing their television news clips, WTN has extensive holdings in domestic material from the mid-sixties to late-seventies and in international news from the seventies on. Given the resources of their London and New York offices combined, some researchers consider WTN on a level just below the majors.

Yet another option is footage from local television news organizations. Whether because of lower costs or the greater likelihood of finding unique images and in-depth coverage, archives of local television news are becoming an attractive alternative source, particularly as they have grown more plentiful over the past several years. For a variety of reasons, more TV news footage is moving from private to public hands. In an interesting reversal of today's trend towards the privatization of information, many local television stations are turning their old news film and, occasionally, tape over to historical societies, universities, and public libraries.

Much news footage—both network and local TV—has been irretrievably lost, especially that from the early years of broadcasting. The networks started saving and indexing their footage before most of the local stations, however, so their archives are currently top-of-the-line. CBS, NBC, and Sherman Grinberg are better organized, better catalogued, and have more systematic procedures for use, licensing, and payment. But for the first 20 years of television news, none of the networks had film libraries per se, even for internal use. It took even longer for them to recognize that *outsiders* might want access to their old news film. When Emile de Antonio and Daniel Talbot asked CBS in 1961 for footage from the 1954 Army-McCarthy hearings, "They thought we were a little strange," says Talbot. But, he recalls, once the network realized the producers were "not just some middle-aged hippies" and "heard the jingle of money," they sat down to talk.

De Antonio and Talbot were planning to use the footage to make *Point of Order!* (1964), a feature-length distillation of the 188-hour hearings. In the first round CBS flatly turned them down. According to de Antonio, the president of CBS News said, "No way you can have that footage. Why raise that up? There's nothing wrong with McCarthy." The idea was later resurrected when CBS News installed a new president who said they'd be willing to sell the footage after all. But then they couldn't find it. It was only after a friend of de Antonio's who worked at CBS spent some time sleuthing that the film was located in their New Jersey storage facility. The next question CBS had to address was who should handle the sales of rights to their footage. They sent de Antonio and Talbot to the vice president in charge of subsidiary rights, who, along a CBS lawyer, negotiated what the producers still considers a tough deal: $50,000 for the entire 188 hours, plus 50 percent of all profits.

Now there are fairly standard procedures for obtaining footage from the networks, which generally do not involve senior vice presidents or news presidents. On walking through the door, one pays a research fee to access the card catalogue or computer index. Screening time is booked at an hourly rate. Users are charged the lab duplication costs and, when ordering a master, pay for the rights up front. Upon completion of the production, a finished copy is sent with an estimate of the footage actually used to determine the final cost. Licensing fees are normally fixed. Discounts can be negotiated only when a producer buys in quantity or walks in the door and immediately guarantees a minimum purchase of a determined number of minutes and will pay on the spot. To place themselves in a position to negotiate, some producers give preference to one of the majors, always going there first and, when the subject allows, buying the bulk of footage from them. This both increases the chances of a quantity discount and establishes a relationship that is more conducive to negotiations.

The state of television news archives at the local level ranges from the sublime to the ridiculous. Collections can be reasonably complete and catalogued on computer files, or they can resemble the far reaches of a



Volunteers from the North come to Mississippi in 1964 to organize black voters and teach in black schools. Among the major resources for *Eyes on the Prize* were collections in the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

Photo: Ken Thompson

family basement—dusty, disorganized, long ignored piles of cardboard boxes tucked away in a back corner. Not uncommonly, hundreds of bits of film, each representing a 10-30 second story identified only by date or maybe a two word tag-line, are thrown into a single film can. Occasionally a script might also be included. Archivist George Talbot, whose State Historical Society of Wisconsin has received several TV news collections, cautions, "Calling TV stations' collections of news footage 'archives' is in many cases a misnomer. They were simply the old footage." Whether old footage is stored or thrown away tends to be an informal decision at most stations. A station's policy can also vary over time, often depending on how conscious of history the news director then on staff happens to be. As Talbot explains, "If there was a change in management or a change in revenues at the station, the first thing to suffer was the organization of the film archives. So you get successions of organizational systems. And if you're lucky, they've got the information about how they work. If you're not, they may have part of the system but they don't have the film organized that way, or they may have lost the log books." Adding to the confusion are the overlapping successions of formats used by the stations over the years: 16mm film, two-inch and one-inch reel-to-reel, three-quarte- inch cassettes, and, most recently, Betacam.

This presents a mixed blessing to public institutions receiving donated news footage. On one hand, the material is clearly a valuable resource and historical record worth preserving. On the other, the recipient is often ill-equipped to handle the material without the various pieces of equipment needed for viewing and lacks the personnel and money to inventory, catalogue, and preserve the footage. The problem is particularly acute for those institutions that become a moving picture archive overnight. Few will turn a donation down, but many are forced to leave the footage as is for an indefinite period of time.

The reasons why more television stations are turning their news footage over to public institutions are more practical than philanthropic. One primary reason is limited storage space. Another major factor is the switch from film to videotape in the late 1970s. Over time, employees with the expertise to deal with earlier formats leave the stations, equipment falls into disuse and disrepair, and the old footage becomes more of a burden than an active resource. Consequently, many of the donations to public archives in the past five years or so have been collections consisting of these older formats. The relationship between donor stations and public archives rarely involves an ongoing deposit of material.

A third factor is the opportunity for tax deductions—an enticement that may eventually result in a significant change in how thoroughly stations catalogue their collections prior to donation. Possibly setting a precedent for other local stations, WSB in Atlanta financed the 10,000 hours of work required to prepare a computer index of their collection, which comprises nearly three million feet of film and represents almost all of the film shot by WSB since they signed on in 1948 as the South's first television station. The collection and index will be donated to the University of Georgia. Since the index will be complete at the time of donation, the value of the gift substantially increases. If the IRS approves this method of appraisal, the WSB-University of Georgia arrangement may result in similar cataloguing efforts by other TV stations.

The general impression among archivists is that the number of television news archives in public institutions has increased over the past several years, although no one knows precisely how many exist. There are, however, several lists of moving picture archives currently being compiled. Richard Prelinger, who runs a commercial film archive in New York City, Prelinger Associates, is preparing *Footage '88: North American Film and Video Sources* for publication this spring. This 600-page directory and reference book will contain descriptive articles on all the major TV news archives among the 1,000 or so collections covered. In researching the book, Prelinger originally thought there might be about 500 archives nationwide,

***The War at Home*, by Glenn Silber and Barry Alexander Brown, relies heavily on footage from local news stations to show how Madison, Wisconsin, once a "hotbed of lethargy," was transformed by the anti-Vietnam War movement.**

Courtesy filmmakers





Mark Kitchell (seated second from left) gathered this team of volunteers to sort through millions of feet of TV news film for *Berkeley in the Sixties*.

Courtesy filmmaker

but has since located 1,500 in corporations, religious institutions, historical societies, and elsewhere. Prelinger predicts the number will grow higher still. Laurie Kahn-Leavitt made contact with many out-of-the-way sources in the South when working as a senior researcher for *Eyes on the Prize*, the public television series on the Civil Rights Movement produced by Henry Hampton's Blackside, Inc. Kahn-Leavitt is now organizing an archival database on film, video, audio, and photo collections for WGBH-Boston, mainly for use by independent producers making programs for *The American Experience*, an upcoming documentary series on U.S. history. She also believes there are thousands of such archives. Bonnie G. Rowan's *Scholar's Guide to Washington, D.C., Film and Video Collections* lists several hundred collections in Washington alone, ranging from the major public domain archives to such commonly overlooked sources as the AFL-CIO, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and foreign embassies.

Hard numbers aside, the growth of television news archives is reflected in the membership of the Film Archives Advisory Committee and Television Archives Advisory Committee (FAAC/TAAC). Responding to the needs of this emerging field, FAAC/TAAC organized the first conference specifically on local television news archives, which was convened last fall by the the State Historical Society of Wisconsin and the American Film Institute's National Center for Film and Video Preservation. It drew nearly 70 representatives, who discussed common issues and problems ranging from off-air taping to a national cataloguing standard.

Though generally not as well equipped or catalogued as the majors, local television news archives offer certain advantages. Foremost among these is that licensing fees are generally much lower. Sometimes footage is even free, but in such instances there are likely to be conditions imposed on the users by the donors. That was the case with a collection given to the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, which became a major source for *Eyes on the Prize*. The donor permitted free licensing—but only for educational use. This was a double-edged sword. Their hands were tied when they prepared to market the series for home video. "After four months we were able—through the Mississippi Attorney General's office—to get them to allow us to distribute *Eyes on the Prize* on home video. But it was a real close call," says Kenn Rabin, who has acted as consultant for historical footage on *Eyes on the Prize*, as well as *Vietnam: A Television History*, *Crisis in Central America*, *The American Experience*, and other PBS series. "It's great when you're making a documentary for PBS, but you trip over it when you want to take that documentary and distribute it theatrically," adds Rabin. Since archives often house collections from various sources, and each might have different stipulations concerning its use, producers should check precisely what these restrictions are.

The case of *Eyes on the Prize* also points to a second advantage offered by local archives—the uniqueness and extent of footage pertaining to local events. Mississippi's wealth of material on James Meredith, the White Citizens Council groups, and other central players and events came to the attention of *Eyes'* researchers fairly late, after money had been spent at the majors for similar footage. Nonetheless, they opted to use Mississippi's material. In Rabin's view, the local news stations' material was markedly superior: "They were still shooting after the networks went home, and they tended to be more in depth." While this decision involved some delays and the loss of their initial investment, "it was more than worth it," according to Rabin. "Last-minute finds like this can be financially dangerous, but they are usually the inspiration that allows the film to take a quantum leap upward."

When dealing directly with local television stations, producers find that the attitudes toward licensing to outsiders vary as widely as the conditions of their old footage. The stations may be intractable in their refusal. Or they may give footage away, as did Dayton's independent station WKEF when several students from Wright State University wanted to make a short film about local "spot" news. According to Tim Ballou, who produced *If It Bleeds, It Leads* (1985) with John Adkin and Steve Bognar, "Being students had a lot to do with getting access. The station probably didn't think it was a big deal; we were 'just kids.'" Also useful in getting a foot in the door was their production teacher, who also happened to be a WKEF camera operator. As is often the case, a sympathetic insider can make the difference.

Furthermore, usually there is much more room for negotiating licensing arrangements with local stations or archives than at the majors. In some cases, producers may find that theirs is the first contract drawn up for such purposes, which can put them in a better bargaining position. A few producers have struck deals in which they have turned the disorganized state of the collections to their advantage, while the archives also derive benefits: in exchange for the archive providing rights to the footage for free, the producer agrees to index the collection. An early example of this kind of trade is *The War at Home* (1976), by Glenn Silber and Barry Alexander Brown. This feature film chronicles the growth of the anti-Vietnam War movement by looking at the microcosm of the University of Wisconsin. It traces the college town's transformation between 1963 to 1973 from a "hotbed of lethargy" to a virtual war-zone, where tear gas, barricades, armored police, and riots filled the streets, culminating in the bombing of the Army Mathematics Research Center and the death of one man working there. In detailing the radicalization of the student body and local community, the filmmakers relied heavily on news footage from Madison, Wisconsin's four TV stations.

The project probably would never have gotten anywhere had it not been for the foresight of a local news director, Blake Kellogg, who worked at the CBS affiliate throughout the 1960s and realized the importance of these events. When leaving the station in 1970, he turned hundreds of thousands of feet of old news film—and all rights—over to the State Historical Society. "He did it for all the right reasons," says Brown. "He had a broad perspective. The station had a minute-to-minute perspective. They didn't understand what he was doing. But he felt his station was more than just a money machine." While gladly accepting the gift, the State Historical Society hadn't the resources to properly inventory or catalogue the footage. So it sat in a vault, practically unusable. Six years later, Glenn Silber had lunch with George Talbot. Silber, a student at the University of Wisconsin in the early seventies, had returned to make a documentary on the anti-war movement and was wondering what archival material the State Historical Society had. First Talbot told him about Kellogg's donation, then made a proposition: Silber could have first exclusive access, with no restrictions on rights—and he could have it for free. In exchange, Silber would go through every box and every frame, organize and log the material, and repair the splices. Silber accepted, and hired Brown to undertake the work. Brown estimates that it took him and an assistant two years of full-time work to index the footage.

Meanwhile Silber had gotten the Wisconsin Education Television interested in presenting the film. They offered a grant, contingent upon proof of access to the proposed resources. The filmmakers' search for documentation, which led them back to the donor station, almost proved to be the film's undoing, for it triggered a debate about whether the station had relinquished its rights—a question the station's new owners challenged. "Ironically," says Silber, "the head of the Wisconsin Educational Television Network had been general manger of the station that gave us all the footage. But the people he hired to replace himself told him, 'No.' They didn't want their footage used in any anthem to the anti-war years." It was the State Attorney General who ultimately broke the stalemate, determining that, because the original owners had taken a tax write-off and because the station had subsequently changed hands, the news film was no longer the station's to give or withhold.

Silber and Brown then set out to talk the other Madison stations into donating their news film from the period to the historical society and agreeing to a similar deal. After long negotiations and with the help of local businessmen who knew the station executives, they overcame the stations' suspicions. The involvement of the Wisconsin Education Television "was always the key," says Silber. "We had the state behind us. It wasn't just two hustlers trying to make a lot of money." Being able to point out the benefit to the stations' tax returns also aided their argument.

Mark Kitchell, a producer who talked several San Francisco stations into a similar exchange, points out that this kind of bargaining works best when dealing with older footage, which is more likely to be poorly catalogued. In seeking archival footage for his three-part, three-hour film, *Berkeley in the Sixties*, Kitchell first concentrated on setting up a logging-for-free-access trade with KRON, where he found a strong ally in film librarian Guy Morrison. Morrison happened to be from Madison, knew *The War at Home*, and was enthusiastic about Kitchell's comparable, although more expansive, project. The agreement with KRON subsequently served as the basis for convincing the other San Francisco stations to adopt a similar arrangement.

But at KPIX Kitchell ran into the kind of snags that can happen when a film production stretches out longer than the tenure of a station contact. The film went into production several years after Kitchell and the news director, a Berkeley graduate, worked out their agreement. By the time Kitchell went to get the footage, the news director had moved and all the station's old news film was on the verge of being discarded. Luck intervened, however, when a historian from Wells Fargo stepped in and said that his company, in a philanthropic gesture, would pay to have the film stored. Kitchell then had access to nearly 700 boxes of film as they were en route from KPIX to the San Francisco State Archive. Logging this material was no mean feat. Unlike KRON's film, these news stories had no dates, no tag lines, no rough index in the can—just coded story numbers. Morrison, who headed Kitchell's research team, eventually broke the code, thereby allowing 300 boxes of film related to the 1950s and sixties to be pulled. Kitchell rounded up a team of 20 volunteers, who went through every box and created a four-volume selective log of KPIX news stories.

Like many archival films *Berkeley in the Sixties*, *The War at Home*, and *Eyes on the Prize* primarily utilize TV footage shot on location. The scarcity of correspondents' stand-ups or anchors' news readings in such productions is largely due to TV news organizations' policy never to license footage with their talents' face or voice. Exceptions to this rule are infrequent. At the networks, special waivers "depend on how a piece will be used, and the significance of the correspondent to the subject," says Neil Waldman of CBS News Archives. He cites Walter Cronkite on the Vietnam War or space flights—subjects with which Cronkite has become publicly associated—as plausible examples. In Kenn Rabin's experience, such requests are generally sent to the vice president of the news division. "I've gotten waivers, but they are few and far between, and usually for important reasons. It takes a lot of work, and it helps to have some clout."

On a local level, however, it is possible to negotiate directly with the talent. This was Robert Epstein and Richard Schmiechen's tactic when making *The Times of Harvey Milk* (1984). Their film uses local news footage to show key historical moments—such as Dianne Feinstein's announcement that San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Milk had been murdered—and to illustrate how the media reacted to Milk, San Francisco's first openly gay elected official. For the on-the-spot stand-ups that punctuate the film, Epstein and Schmiechen approached each individual reporter. None were particularly interested in payment, but some voiced concerns about having their image "twisted." Assuaging their fears "took a fair amount of talk, and in a few cases letting them see the rough cut," says Schmiechen. The reluctant few were coaxed along by one of the correspondents who was also interviewed for the film. In addition to these direct discussions, the filmmakers also had to go through American Federation of Television and Radio Announcers, the bargaining agent for on-air talent. AFTRA wanted the minimum: $200-$300 per correspondent. "It's not minimal when you're an independent," observes Schmiechen, who eventually arranged a deal for deferred payment.

In general, Epstein and Schmiechen found the stations reluctant to deal with them. Although they went to very same stations as Kitchell, Epstein and Schmiechen were seeking a different category of footage—more recent, and already well catalogued. The stations needed no favors. "They really didn't want to give out footage. Basically, they don't want to be bothered," says Schmiechen. "Their libraries are there to provide footage for the news. Selling footage wouldn't be a big enough business to justify having somebody else in there." Nonetheless, the filmmakers persisted until they obtained contracts from all the local stations. They were helped by their subject. "We had the right issue, because the people at the stations loved Harvey Milk. He was wonderful for them and for San Francisco television. They wanted to help the project because there was a certain sentimental attachment, and they thought it was of value."

As Schmiechen and other producers point out, the search for archival footage of news events should not end with TV stations and archives. Among the resources for historic material that proved important for *The War at Home*, *Harvey Milk*, and *Berkeley in the Sixties* were other independent video- and filmmakers. For *Eyes on the Prize* much valuable TV news footage was found tucked away in obscure storage spaces. In general, tracking down such material requires some basic detective skills and legwork, and getting it often tests one's powers of persuasion. Kahn-Leavitt located material for *Eyes on the Prize* "in people's attics and basements, in small southern stations, in the back rooms of small production companies, and in politicians' closets." She remembers, "I found widows sitting on vast quantities of stuff their husbands had photographed. They had no idea what it was worth and were very reluctant to have it leave their houses, because they thought they'd never see it again—and I was a stranger." In addition, Kahn-Leavitt called all the southern television stations. "Most of them were a bust. They'd thrown the stuff out ages ago. But in a couple of cases, I hit pay dirt."

□ □ □

Many producers have obtained television news footage simply by taping off-air, without getting or even asking for rights. And some producers take footage on principle. In a brochure accompanying their situationist videotape *Call It Sleep* (1982), Isaac Cronin and Terrel Seltzer express their disdain for "manageable dissent" and challenge those who ask whether copyright clearance for the television images in their video was obtained: "These 'courageous souls' think that a disrespect for cultural and social conventions should begin after property rights have been observed. No doubt many of these people have already produced or dream of producing an artifact which they want protected by the state." While many producers have no qualms about taking news and other off-air material without permission, opinions can suddenly change when contemplating the unlicensed use of material from other independent producers' work. Likewise, the same producers who ignore a corporation's copyright are often careful to copyright their own productions. "Independents are constantly forced into ethical choices on the basis of budgets," says Robert Spencer, to whom

WABC gave footage for his *Six O'Clock and All's Well* (1980), a behind-the-scenes look at news production. Independents' "situational ethics," as Spencer calls it, are further complicated by a hazy understanding of the legality of their options.

"Fair use" in particular is an oft-cited but little understood clause in the copyright law that many independents regard as a legal loophole. But this is a risky presumption because there is only a scanty court record on fair use of broadcast journalism. "I'd love to go to court on that one," says de Antonio. "The networks don't own the public history of the United States." In fact de Antonio anticipated a challenge over *Millhouse* (1971). The television footage for this film on Richard Nixon was literally stolen from one of the networks, not just appropriated. An anonymous caller offered it to de Antonio for free, and then at the filmmaker's instructions, left the hundreds of containers at a film lab in the middle of the night. While de Antonio was audited by the Internal Revenue Service, possibly prompted by the Nixon Administration, the network never said anything. "How could they? Nobody could prove where it came from," the filmmaker observes.

According to the copyright statute, in order to determine whether something falls under fair use, four factors must be taken into consideration: "1) the purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit education purposes; 2) the nature of the copyrighted material; 3) the amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and 4) the effect of use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work." The law says that the fair use "doctrine is equitable and is so flexible as virtually to defy definition." Because each case is decided on its own merits, the fair use

ARCHIVISTS' AGENDA FOR INDEPENDENT MEDIA

At the annual Film Archives Advisory Committee/Television Archives Advisory Committee (FAAC/TAAC) meeting in New York City in mid-November a special session was organized to discuss film and video preservation specifically related to the work of experimental and independent artists. Given the recent discussions in the pages of *The Independent* concerning the role of the archives in establishing a cinematic canon and the flurry of film laboratory closings affecting independent producers, this issue was placed on the agenda of FAAC/TAAC none too soon. [See "The Good, the Bad, the Forgettable," by Edward Ball, March 1987, "Letters," by the author and response by Ball, June 1987, and "Going Out of Business: The Decline of New York Film Labs," by Quynh Thai, August/September 1987.]

FAAC/TAAC was born over 15 years ago as an informal meeting of representatives from the major film archives—the Library of Congress, the Museum of Modern Art, the George Eastman House, and the University of California, Los Angeles Film and Television Archives—in order to coordinate their efforts to preserve nitrate film. Other problems, such as funding for film preservation by the National Endowment for the Arts, new archiving, and preservation technologies, as well as other issues of mutual concern, have also been discussed at the organization's biannual meetings. About five years ago, FAAC/TAAC expanded its membership as a number of non-nitrate holding archives, for example, Anthology Film Archives and the Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research, joined the group. Then a number of universities and state historical societies, which had acquired large collections of local television news materials, began attending. As a result, the recent meeting in New York City, hosted by ABC Television, included over 50 participating organizations from as far away as Hawaii and as close as the Lincoln Center Dance Film Collection across the street. Topics discussed at the three-day meeting included the state of stock shot libraries, copyright laws, fundraising by nonprofit archives, Internal Revenue Service appraisals of film and video donations, and the preservation of independent film and video.

Speaking to the last point, Bruce Jenkins, film curator at the Walker Arts Center in Minneapolis, opened the discussion by stating that it was high time that U.S. film/video archives coordinate their efforts to preserve the work of independent artists, especially since much experimental work (on video) from the 1960s has apparently already been lost. Jenkins outlined four major areas of concern: avant-garde work, regional films, New American Cinema, and work of the foreign avant-garde. Jenkins further stated that the Walker had already begun collecting New American Cinema and hopes to continue to do so.

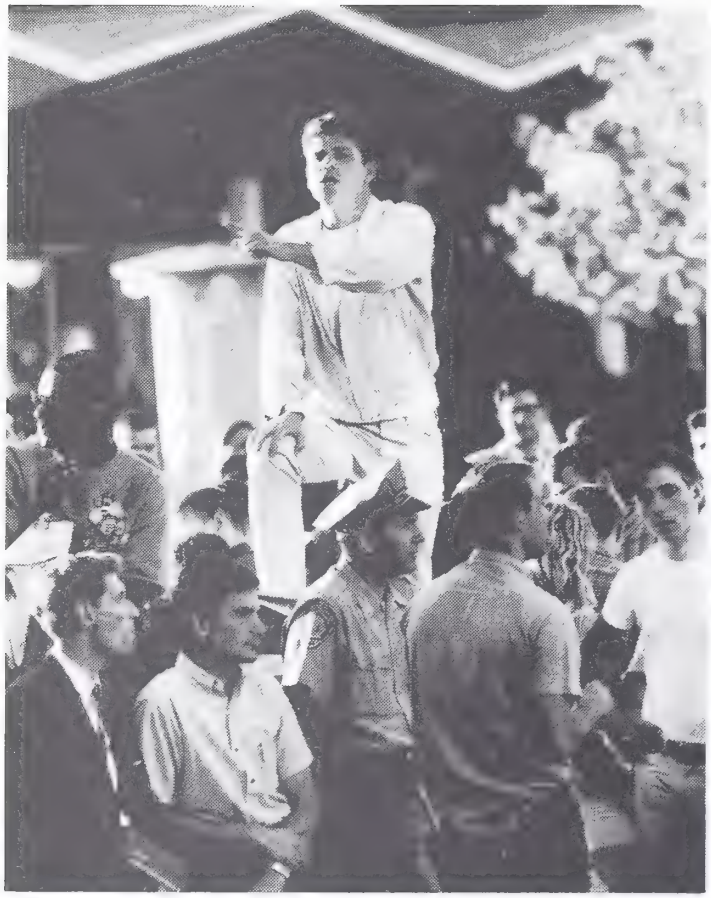
Mary Lea Bandy, director of the Museum of Modern Art Film Department, noted that archives had to be concerned with two separate issues, preservation *and* exhibition. She added that while most filmmakers might be induced to place a projection print on permanent loan, it will be more difficult to secure preprint material, so that storing projection positives in an archive's controlled environment might be a desirable first step. Jon Gartenberg, assistant curator at MoMA, commented that not only experimental films, but also documentaries and independent videotapes needed to be considered. This is especially true, he said, since early video formats have now become archaic, and problems have already developed in terms of transferring this work to usable formats. Since commercial laboratories have proven themselves unreliable, archives must establish policies for the filmmaker to have access, since he or she may need to have new projection prints made.

Noting that many independents have ignored their copyright obligations, Paul Spehr of the Library of Congress' Motion Picture Division stated that the Library has already demanded a certain number of independent films for copyright purposes. A copyright is not legally binding unless the filmmaker registers his or her copyright and places either a release print or, in the case of independents circulating fewer than 10 prints, a video copy on deposit at the library, to be replaced by a print after five years.

I noted that my efforts to attract the work of independents, including my letter published in *The Independent*, so far had not elicited a great response from the independent filmmaking community. Everyone present agreed that the first goal of all the archives will be to educate independent filmmakers about the opportunities available in their institutions. Storing prints and/or preprint material in an archivally sound, climate-controlled environment, where the material would also be safe from the roller-coaster economics of film labs and from film/video pirates, would certainly be preferable to basements, attics, and/or commercial operations. It was further agreed that a standardized deposit agreement for independent filmmakers should be proposed, and that all the archives interested in preserving and collecting independent work will coordinate their efforts for this purpose, in a fashion similar to their coordinated efforts to preserve American silent films with the American Film Institute playing a coordinating role. In fact, Susan Dalton, archivist for the American Film Institute, offered to begin coordination of preservation efforts in the independent sector. Hopefully, both independent film- and videomakers and film/video archivists will be able to join forces in the near future, so that this work is not lost to posterity.

JAN-CHRISTOPHER HORAK

Jan-Christopher Horak is the film curator at the George Eastman House. The Eastman House hopes to concentrate its collection of independent films on documentary and work from the East Coast.



Berkeley in the Sixties **producer Kitchell traded services with several San Francisco television stations to get free access to their old news footage, thereby obtaining scenes such as this police car sit-in by students in the Free Speech Movement.**

Courtesy filmmaker

case histories—which more often involve print media—provide limited clues about how a court would rule given a slightly different set of circumstances. But there are two areas courts routinely emphasize: the proportion of copyrighted material used, and the possible negative effects on the market value of the property resulting from its use. In addition, courts examine the nature and purpose of the allegedly infringing work, recognizing that the public interest, as well as possible damage to the copyright holder, should be taken into account.

The networks themselves have employed the fair use defense. ABC hauled it out last November when the BBC protested their airing of excerpts from *The Secret Society*—a series covering Britain's secret plans for its first spy satellite, barred from broadcast in the U.K. under the Official Secrets Act. ABC also invoked fair use when taken to court by two student filmmakers and their funders, who won a ruling against the network. The Iowa State University students had made a film about Dan Gable, a student wrestler who won a gold medal at the 1972 Olympics. When one of the students was hired by ABC Sports as a temporary tape operator during the Olympics, he learned they were planning to do a program on Gable and offered to show them his film. ABC ended up using eight minutes without permission or payment, declaring it fair use. The courts disagreed. ABC's sale of advertising placed its use in the commercial category. Also, the court did not accept ABC's argument that since the students' film was meant for educational use, it had no television market to speak of. It was good enough for ABC to use, the court noted, adding, "The fair use doctrine is not a license for corporate theft.... Indeed, we do not suppose that appellants would embrace their own defense theory if another litigant sought to apply it to the ABC evening news."

The court was right—none of the networks like to see their work used under circumstances they do not control. But these Goliaths are reluctant to risk the public embarrassment of a suit against a small, nonprofit or undercapitalized David. Nor are they anxious to invest time and money in a suit that, if won, would result in a relative pittance in damage awards. But this does not prevent them from using the threat of a lawsuit to protect their material. Sometimes the tactic works, as when CBS filed a quarter-million dollar suit in the mid-1970s against Telethon, a video art collective cofounded by John Margolies and Billy Adler. CBS served them with legal documents after reading about their installation at the Whitney Museum of American Art in the *New York Times*. The installation consisted of a mock living room, complete with a TV set that played Telethon's two off-air video collages of beauty pageants and the 1972 national political conventions. While extended clips from all three networks were included in the tapes, CBS was the only one that issued a challenge. Adler now believes CBS was compelled to take action, since they were then on the war path with Vanderbilt and trying to maintain a consistent public policy. Neither Margolies nor Adler cared to be a test case, so they resolved the matter by cutting the CBS footage.

Whether or not a network will file suit depends largely on two variables: advice from their legal department, which producers can somewhat reliably second-guess with the help of their own lawyers, and the less predictable factor of personalities at a network's helm. When *Inside Story*, a PBS series on news media, first went on the air in 1981 and subjected the networks' news coverage to critical analysis, NBC News president Bill Small produced lots of sound and fury. "It was more a personality matter and principle with him," says one PBS source, adding that Small had a reputation for being churlish. But Small's complaints evaporated soon after the attorneys from PBS and NBC had their initial chat. "Bill Small just had other things to worry about after a while," and evidently NBC's lawyers were not optimistic about winning a fair use battle.

Similarly, a New York City station backed off from any kind of challenge to independent producer Mary McGee after she spelled out her fair use argument pertaining to *On Television: The Violence Factor* (1984). A vice president from WNEW had watched the nationally aired program, which contained several hundred off-air clips, and noticed the station's logo and news segment in the "Violence in the News" section. The next day McGee got a call from a WNEW lawyer, who requested a copy of the tape. She complied, also enclosing a note pointing out why fair use applied here. "Their counsel returned my tape with a cursory thank you note," says McGee, "and I never heard from them again." McGee, who had reviewed her fair use claims with several lawyers, says she was protected for three reasons: her tape was educational in nature, the clips were short—between nine and 28 seconds—and they were clearly presented as quotations, not as her own work.

As the cases of *Inside Story*, *The Violence Factor*, and Telethon illustrate, there is a third factor in assessing the likelihood of a legal challenge: a more public venue increases the possibilities for becoming a target. Broadcast television is the most widely visible outlet, exhibition spaces in museums and media arts centers the least, with cable TV and theatrical venues falling somewhere in between. Even when a work is screened within the relatively small and self-contained confines of the art world, however, a prominent review which thrusts the work into the limelight, such as Telethon received in the *New York Times*, can generate attention from a miffed copyright holder. The safest route is to obtain licensing for all venues a work will appear in, even nontheatrical exhibition. Nonetheless, many producers take the gamble and assume, usually with good reason, that, if their work's exhibition is limited to nontheatrical, nonbroadcast screenings, their use of unlicensed news clips will pass unnoticed by copyright holders.

Proving fair use may be easier when the media itself is the subject of a program, as in *Inside Story* or *The Violence Factor*, than when news clips depict events within a narrative, as in Jacki Ochs and Daniel Keller's



An Environmental Protection Agency toxiocologist strolls through dioxin-contaminated Times Beach, Missouri, in footage Daniel Keller and Jacki Ochs obtained from a local TV station for *The Secret Agent*.

Courtesy filmmaker

Vietnam: The Secret Agent (1983). To illustrate the history of Agent Orange's use as a herbicide and weapon in Vietnam and the subsequent debate over its effects on veterans' health, the film includes TV news clips about chemical accidents, government press conferences, veterans' lawsuits, and other key events. Footage was obtained through television stations, veteran's off-air recordings, and the Vanderbilt Television News Archives. Using tapes on loan from Vanderbilt as a source is not an uncommon practice among producers—even though many are often unclear about the legality of this practice and will not admit doing it. Ochs, on the other hand, has always been open about her Vanderbilt source.

Since 1968 Vanderbilt University has taped all of the networks' nightly newscasts off-air and made them available to researchers, who can either view tapes at the archive in Nashville or rent dubs at cost through the mail. Vanderbilt's service is cheap, fast, convenient, and unique—enticements for any producer working under a restricted budget and deadline. However, the networks, not Vanderbilt, hold the copyright and users must sign an agreement saying they will not duplicate, rebroadcast, or publicly show the tapes. This effectively prohibits the broadcast or theatrical screening of excerpts, except those that would fall under the fair use exemption. Therefore any producer who uses Vanderbilt's tapes—which are easy to recognize: each has a timecode, date, and source burned in—ought to be confident that their case would hold up in court.

Ochs was. "I made sure there was a legitimate legal argument on our behalf before I proceeded." Two lawyers reviewed her case and concluded that she would be protected by fair use, citing *Secret Agent*'s educational purpose, the informational (vs. creative) nature of the copyrighted footage, the brevity of the segments (10-20 seconds each) relative to the length of the entire newscast, and the lack of adverse effect on the market value of these particular newscasts. One lawyer also pointed out to Ochs, "All the material is ancient history as far as newsworthiness is concerned, and there is no way that the use would diminish the amount of money which the copyright owners could get from other potential users in the future.... If anything, your film may be expected to increase the value of archival news material dealing with Vietnam." The networks never challenged Ochs, although at least one surely saw the film, since they bought stock footage from the producers for their own Agent Orange news stories. Nonetheless, producers using footage from Vanderbilt are treading on somewhat sensitive ground, given the history of CBS's suit against the archive. There is always the possibility that CBS or another network might start a similar suit if they consider the dubbing and airing of excerpts to be getting out of hand.

Fair use is not a license for corporate theft, nor is it a loophole allowing any documentary producer to use clips simply by calling their program "educational." "Producers should not feel they don't have to pay anyone for their footage because they're doing some kind of public service. That's not it at all," says Rabin. "First and foremost, never should fair use be used specifically to get away with not paying for footage. The real purpose of fair use is to make available to a filmmaker footage that otherwise would be unavailable to them." The applicability of fair use may also fluctuate for the same film, depending on how it is distributed. "Once you get into foreign sales or home video, I think your case pretty much goes down the drain," says Rabin. "The same footage that might be fair use when a documentary is broadcast on PBS may not be considered fair use when that same documentary gets sold to home video."

Another factor to consider when debating whether to take footage under fair use is how this might affect subsequent producers and researchers needing material from the same source. Rabin illustrates the possible damage with the story of a PBS producer who first intended to pay a private archive for footage, then at the last minute decided the clips would fall under fair use. As a result, says Rabin, "This person, who had tremendous holdings in news footage, said that they'd never sell to any public television entity again. And that has now held for four to six years. It has handicapped pretty much every series I've worked on."

Such negative repercussions are not limited to fair use. Cases where original materials get lost or are never returned, where footage is copied and given to other producers or fees are never paid all hurt those who follow. By the same token, producers can improve relations by educating the new and small, out-of-the-way archives about standard contracts, what film labs to use, and what logistical procedures work best. Filmmakers such as Silber and Kitchell are helping archives put substantial portions of their collections into shape. Through their powers of persuasion—and through their films and tapes that give renewed exposure to archival news footage that not so long ago stations were routinely throwing out—producers encourage television stations to recognize the value of their holdings. That is the first and most critical step in preserving and moving into public hands our history as it was recorded, interpreted, and shaped by television news.

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MEASURING VIDEOACTIVITY: THE 1987 AFI VIDEO FESTIVAL



In Mako Idemitsu's new tape, *Yoji, What's Wrong with You?*, one of the "New Works" screened at the AFI Video Festival, the videomaker continues her exploration of mother-child relationships where television monitors display extra-narrative scenes in dramas of psychological manipulation.

Photo: Marita Sturken, courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix

Martha Gever

Christine Tamblyn introduced her remarks at the closing panel of the 1987 American Film Institute Video Festival, held in late October at AFI's Los Angeles campus, by asking, "Why is there no good video art?" Since this panel was designed to prompt commentary on the tapes in the "New Works" section of the festival, Tamblyn implied that the none of the tapes that premiered at this edition of the festival were up to snuff. I disagree. Not only did many of the tapes in that section confirm that compelling independent video continues to be made, but I'd extend that observation to cover many of the tapes included in the "Only Human: Sex, Gender, and Other Misrepresentations" program, curated by Bill Horrigan and B. Ruby Rich.

Ever since the AFI initiated its annual video festival in 1981, the reviews I've read and some I've commissioned and edited have uniformly reported a lackluster, predictable event. However, when I heard that the festival would go on as scheduled, despite the withdrawal of almost all support from the festival's major patron, Sony, I decided to see for myself. Because it was logistically impossible to watch every one of the tapes in the festival (a room was provided for screenings on request, but it was booked completely after the middle of the second day), I decided to concentrate on the two sections mentioned above. Also, much informal discussion centered on the premieres. However, the "Only Human" section and the program on "Media and the Vietnam War" proved extremely popular, and in the hallways and on the patios of the AFI buildings I frequently heard favorable talk about these as well.

To take the temperature of the festival, apart from my own observations, I periodically polled other festival-goers about their impressions of the other programs in the packed four-day schedule. Finding anyone who attended screenings in the programs devoted to Bennett Award winners (for excellence in local television programming), tapes from past International Public Television Screening Conference (INPUT), Yugoslavian video art, or the selections in the two student video sections—the U.S. students' work that is an AFI Video Festival staple and an additional program of student tapes from West Germany—was difficult. During a conversation between screenings AFI's director of TV/Video, Terry Lawler, told me that publicity directed to Brazilian Angelinos produced considerable attendance at the program of tapes from Brazilian TV and independent works from Sao Paolo, but most out-of-towners still seemed to gravitate towards the three programs I noted earlier.

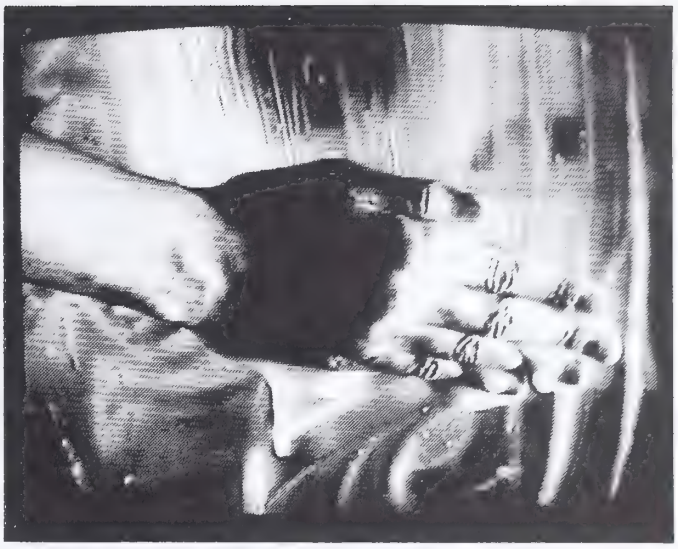
Aside from the Bennett Awards, which provided the occasion for a reception and ceremony on the second night of the festival, this was not a congratulatory event. Instead, the festival was largely devoted to back-to-back screenings in some rooms, discussions with some of the artists responsible for "New Works" following their screenings in AFI's luxurious, well-equipped Mark Goodson video theater, and several topical panels interspersed in the program. Whereas in past years AFI encouraged the makers of premiering tapes to attend the festival by paying their transportation costs and providing hotel accommodations, this year such expenses were subsidized only up to $200 per production (although some panelists' travel and hotel bills were completely underwritten by AFI).

The absence of prestigious prizes and minimal hospitality, however, did not deter a number of

producers whose work was programmed from attending. In addition to videomakers, audiences included a number of curators, writers, students, and administrators of media organizations who travelled to Los Angeles for a concentrated dose of video viewing. The final AFI tally for attendance for the four-day festival, according to festival coordinator Ken Kirby, was 1,700, including single admissions as well as 225 registrants for the entire event. Since many of the festival passes ($75) and one-day tickets ($25) were complementary, Kirby added, sales recouped only a small portion of the festival's overall $200,000 budget. Lawler explained that AFI picked up the tab for about half the costs, advertising in the festival catalogue brought in an additional $25,000, and a large donation from an anonymous AFI trustee defrayed many of the remaining expenses. Having withdrawn major funding for the event, Sony lent equipment and provided other in-kind support, as did Ampex and Ikegami.

Although the festival began promptly at 10 o'clock on Thursday morning, much of the work shown the first day received underexposure, due to weekday scheduling and severe rainstorms. Ilan Ziv and Freke Vuijst's impressive *Consuming Hunger*, a three-part documentary on the mass media's belated and superficial treatment of famine in Africa and analysis of mass media spectacles like the *Live Aid* benefit, was screened for a handful of people. The next morning, Peter Rose's *Babel*, an irreverent, engrossing piece of pseudo-anthropology and imaginative linguistics conceived as a film flanked by video monitors, attracted only a few more spectators. By Friday afternoon, though, the Goodson Theater was packed for a screening of *Ethnic Notions*, Marlon Riggs' detailed, informative historical analysis of black stereotypes in U.S. culture. Likewise, there was a full house that evening when I saw *Women with a Past*—Lyn Blumenthal's composite of interviews with artists Nancy Spero, Christine Choy, Martha Rosler, and Yvonne Rainer—and Sherry Millner and Ernest Larsen's *Out of the Mouth of Babes*, a densely edited, humorous commentary on literacy seen through the prisms of a child's acquisition of language and the doubletalk of U.S. foreign policy in Central America. Despite the sparse attendance at the earlier screenings, I'd contest Tamblyn's conclusion that video art suffers from a paucity of ideas or technique on the basis of these works alone.

The premieres at the AFI Video Festival are intended to present accomplished work by experienced producers, so seeing tapes that met those criteria in the "New Works" section was not surprising. Still, Neil Seiling, the guest curator of that program, broke with AFI Video Festival traditions with his eclectic selection and recognition of videomakers who are not members of the old boy network that dominates video exhibition. Unlike the 1986 edition of this festival, where work by women and people of color was almost totally absent, this year's premieres of tapes by white male artists accounted for less than half, although only one black producer, Riggs, and one Asian, Mako Idemitsu, were presented in "New Works."



In Kathy Tanney's *Spin Off*, shown in the "Only Human" program, an off-screen voice engages in a TV-inspired reverie about a liaison between Mary Richards and J.R. Ewing, while on the screen her condensation of TV fantasies takes shape thanks to the wonders of electronic editing.

Photo: Gary Schwartz

To consider whether or not Seiling's choices represented "the best" or even "good" video art—vague terms bandied about at the panel that wrapped up the festival—would require a major essay, one that would debunk the assumptions of those who use such evaluative language. It seems fair, however, to comment here that Seiling's curatorial experience (at UCVideo in Minneapolis, now renamed Intermedia Arts of Minnesota), his decision to highlight "video practice" rather than "video art," and his willingness to showcase work with social import represented a departure from similar programs at past AFI video festivals, where technical experimentation was often favored at the expense of a commitment to social issues. The central role accorded guest curators in 1987 also broke with the festival's tradition of placing most responsibility for selections in the hands of the festival director, and the strength of the 1987 program can be credited primarily to this decision.

If the "New Works" indicated the variety and vitality of video practices in the late eighties, the "Only Human" section emphatically confirmed this assessment. By applying a broad interpretation to the topic of sex and gender and abjuring rigid stylistic constraints, co-curators Rich and Horrigan amassed a program of 76 tapes and one installation which, despite wildly differing subjects and approaches, effectively mapped the topography of sexual discourse in contemporary culture. Additionally, some overlap between this program and the "New Works" allowed comparisons of work by particular individuals and collectives that was otherwise difficult to extract from the festival's mélange. For example, Mako Idemitu's recent *Yoji, What's Wrong with You?* could be viewed in conjunction with her two earlier tapes *Great Mother: Harumi* and *The Marriage of Yasushi* included in "Only Human." Lisa Steele and Kim Tomczak's tape *Private Eyes* premiered, while their *In the Dark* also played in the "Only Human" section. One recent *Paper Tiger Television* show, *Donna Harraway Reads National Geographic*, was programmed by Rich and Horrigan, and Seiling selected two others, *Thulani Davis Asks, "Why Howard Beach?"* and *Judith Williamson Consumes Passionately in Southern California.*

Among the tapes on sex and gender, prominent themes emerged and could be considered in relation to a variety of contingent works. The most pronounced of these was AIDS, since, as Rich wrote in her essay in the festival catalogue, "[A]ny start at thinking through the questions of gender formation and the social construction of sexuality in 1987 must confront the medical emergency and social hysteria passing under the name of AIDS." I asked John Greyson to write a separate review of this aspect of "Only Human" [see his article on page 30], but I'll interject that his tape *The ADS Epidemic* stood out as an incisive parody and exposé of the mass media's conservative moral righteousness in relation to sexuality and AIDS. The preponderance of Canadian work—Greyson's included—was a more curious undercurrent in this program. In part, the interest in sexuality exhibited by Canadian videomakers can be attributed to the harsh censorship laws enacted by many of the provinces north of the border. For whatever reason, the Canadian work selected for this section provided some of the program's highlights: the Hummer Sisters' *Hormone Warzone*, Tanya Mars' *Pure Virtue*, Richard Fung's *Chinese Characters*, and Joe Sarahan's *Holy Joe* were among the commendable tapes on view at the festival.

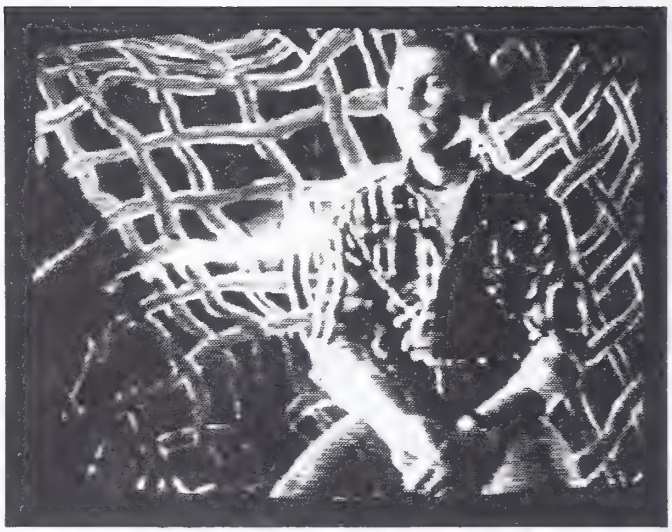
Perhaps the most widely discussed work in this program, however, was *Dick Talk*, by Roberta Hammond, a.k.a. Roberta X. Hammond's use of a pseudonym conforms with the anonymity of the women in her tape (she's one of them) whose faces are never fully shown. Shot and edited without fancy flourishes, the tape documents a freewheeling, intimate discussion among straight, white, middle-class women friends engaged in unpretentious, sometimes comical, talk

about their attitudes toward and experiences with penises. The premise is simple and the talk is specific to the women involved, but the tape's appeal rests on the relationship between the subject—women frankly talking about their sexual pleasure (and displeasure)—and the absence of comparable representations in our culture. During the panel discussion devoted to the "Only Human" program, Hammond spoke from the audience, recounting the her tape's dismal distribution record and the rejections by women's video festivals and other media showcases that she had received.

The meaning and impact of *Dick Talk* depends on cultural conditions and conventions, but then, so does any representation. What Horrigan and Rich demonstrated was that there is plenty of video worth watching and worth considering in the context of a survey of independent media, and that such work is being made by plenty of people who have not been awarded the mantle of "major video artist." Many of the tapes I saw at the AFI Video Festival—and many by artists whose work I've never seen before—could be cited as refutations of the idea that alternative video production is moribund, the poor step-child of commercial television or avant-garde film. If the AFI Video Festival continues to provide the occasion for such imaginative and intelligent programs, it will provide a service to everyone who has not abandoned the viability of unorthodox, alternative media.

The videotapes on AIDS in the "Only Human" section of the AFI festival included several memorial portraits; outstanding among them was Stashu Kybartas' unsentimental *Danny*.

Courtesy AFI



VIDEO ON AIDS AT AFI

John Greyson

There have already been many "turning points" in the representation of AIDS in the media: the first "gay cancer" newsclips of '81; the *Time* and *Newsweek* "gay plague" cover stories of '83; the "human face of AIDS"—i.e., Rock Hudson—in '85; the "heterosexualization of AIDS" in '87. The last two years in particular have witnessed a veritable media explosion on the subject, and the independent video sector, led by gay and lesbian artists, has valiantly tried to introduce other voices into this overwhelming conservative and complacent discourse. As turning points go, '87 was the year that a bumper crop of AIDS tapes were produced by independents.

The curators for the "Only Human" section of the AFI Video Festival, Bill Horrigan and B. Ruby Rich, decided this ground swell should not pass unrecognized, and devoted nearly a third of their program to the topic. In her introduction to this portion of the festival, Rich commented, "To speak of sexuality and the body and not also speak of AIDS would be, well, obscene." Running the gamut from dramas and conventional documentaries through experimental works and music videos, the 21 titles (totalling eight hours) left viewers variously empowered, drained, angry, exhausted, exhilarated, in tears.

Unlike their broadcast counterparts, the educational tapes on AIDS that Rich and Horrigan included do not assume a white, middle-class audience (although they seem to assume a straight one). Of the four tapes in this category, ODM Productions' *Sex, Drugs and AIDS* and *AIDS: Changing the Rules*, by AIDSFilms, exhibited the high production values and celebrity pizazz often thought necessary to engage an audience leery of being lectured. In the latter, Ruben Blades has a wonderful moment with a condom and a banana, although dull Ron Reagan Jr. seems a strange choice for co-host. Both tapes attempt a direct approach to sex and drugs but often digress into the sort of hipness that becomes irritatingly coy. In contrast, Aaron Ranen and Charlotte Beyers' *AIDS in Your School* and Paul Buchbinders' *AIDS: Questions and Answers* are less flashy and more direct. The former uses teenage hosts who conduct fairly relaxed conversations with people with AIDS (PWAs), while *Questions and Answers* is street-smart, but unpretentious, and effectively speaks to its intended audience of Chicago's minority populations. Not so *Black People Get AIDS Too*, by Cedric Pounds and Robert Boudreaux, which attempts to address the disproportionate number of black people who have AIDS (25 percent of PWAs in the U.S. are black). To do this the producers elicit opinions from three-piece suited doctors who compete at being as conservative and uncontroversial as possible. Black AIDS activists like the Reverend Carl Bean, known for his outspoken criticisms of the politics of health care and the racism that characterizes AIDS funding, are notably absent.

AIDS: A Bad Way to Die, produced by and for prisoners, shares some of the same problems. The interviews with three prisoners with AIDS are made purposely terrifying—and exploitative—in an effort to scare an audience into safe sex and safe intravenous drug use (as if condoms or clean needles were available to prisoners). If this were CBS, we'd be outraged at the level of manipulation, but it's much more difficult to judge the political intentions of a media project when the production is in the hands of the disenfranchised. Certainly, the tape's producers, the Taconic Video Team, offer no critique of the prison system here or of health care within its walls, leading to conjecture about who had editorial control. The three interviews are rescued, however, by their leisurely length, allowing the men a semblance of credibility, if not dignity. All six of these tapes thoughtlessly reproduce mainstream medical theories of HIV transmission and infection, without reference to other theories concerning co-factors or alternate causes. Most importantly, the pro-condom/clean needle message conveyed in these works is not placed in a larger context of sexual self-awareness and general good health. Despite these limitations, all of these tapes go beyond the "just say no" message favored in government-sponsored media campaigns and are, therefore, probably not reaching very many of the people whom they address.

Memorial portraits of PWAs constitute a genre within the gay media community, and there were two included in "Only Human." Michael Aue's *I'm Still Alive* is as conventional as others I've seen, concentrating on the personal, the heroic, the sentimental, avoiding anger and politics. On the other hand, *Danny*, by Stashu Kybartas, is more demanding, more complex, and ultimately more moving, although Kybartas refuses to indulge in clichéd sentimentality. Layers of slides, landscapes, and processed imagery complement an equally layered soundtrack of stories and memories in a tape that remembers a defiant disco queen who clearly loved his place in the seventies gay subculture. Danny's particular story, including his sexual fantasies while he is sick and his problematic return to his parents, are understated and compelling.

BOOKS and PUBLICATIONS

Independent Feature Film Production Goodell $9.95
Legal structure and financing, the pre-production package, the production process, post-production distribution and marketing, and samples of limited partnership agreements and budgets.

The Independent Film and Videomakers Guide Wiese $16.95
Advice on film and video financing, investor presentations and limited partnerships. Writing a prospectus, market research, finding distributors, negotiating, income projections, list of buyers of non-theatre films, pay and foreign tv, and home video, contacts for music video.

Film and Video Budgets Wiese $16.95
How to prepare budgets for low budget features, commercials, shorts, music videos, pay tv segments. Sample budgets, practical advice and money saving tips.

Home Video: Producing for the Home Market Wiese $16.95
Advice on the successful development and distribution of original home video programs. New marketing opportunities for independent producers.

The Copyright Primer for Film and Video Sparkman $3.50
Practical copyright information, what does or doesn't need a copyright, registration procedure, exceptions and a sample release.

Selected Issues in Media Law Mayer $2.50
Legal information on copyrights, option agreements, distribution contracts and a glossary of legal terms.

Ship Shape Shipping Lidell $3.00
Practical advice on international transport of film and video tapes.

Get the Money and Shoot Jackson $20.00
How to obtain government, corporate and foundation grants, how to write a proposal, and budgets. Film production from start to finish. Reading list.

Before You Shoot Garvy $10.00
Decision making and organizing for the production side of filmmaking.

Sponsors: A Guide for Video and Filmmakers
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Producer's Masterguide '87 $15.00
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The nuts and bolts of self distribution. Topics include promotion, types of costs, bookings, running an office, and more. Photocopy.

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Audio CASSETTES



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A number of short tapes programmed for the AFI festival variously address the mass media's impact on the crisis we are living through. Isaac Julien's music video *This Is Not an AIDS Advertisement* challenges the British media's anti-sex AIDS campaign with images of boys frolicking suggestively in an electronically-processed landscape, while Julien's lyrics repeatedly tell us to "feel no guilt in our desire." Images of a young gay man's fears in *A*, by Andre Burke, locate the body as the site of betrayal, no longer invincible in the sexual battlefield. (The inclusion of *A* is particularly significant, since its opening night screening at last years' festival as the winner of the student video award was covertly suppressed by the AFI.) Both Gregg Bordowitz' *Some Aspects of a Shared Lifestyle* and Barbara Hammer's *Snow Job* dissect hysterical AIDS headlines and news accounts to reveal the not very subtle ideological biases of much that has passed for journalism about this health crisis.

Two longer works, the collectively made *Testing the Limits* and Stuart Marshall's *Bright Eyes*, were the only tapes that examined in any detail the politics of this "plague." The documentary *Testing the Limits* shows myriad examples of New York street activism and includes numerous statements about the political meaning of AIDS and the negligence of government and medical establishments. Using different forms and styles of television representation, *Bright Eyes* places AIDS firmly within a history of medical science, representations, and sexuality. The single most glaring exclusion in such an otherwise heterogeneous program were explicit safe sex videos like the Gay Men's Health Crisis' *Chance of a Lifetime*. Presumably this had nothing to do with prudishness, since there were sexually explicit tapes in the larger "Only Human" program.

Despite this absence, the AIDS tapes that were programmed provided a much-needed overview of what has been done so far and how much still needs to be done. The great temptation to be prescriptive—to demand, for instance, numerous video projects interrogating public policies concerning research, treatments, and funding—may be tempting, given the enormous consequences of these policies in people's lives—or deaths. However, the full range of work in "Only Human" gives voice to a collective authority that belies any dictates of a "correct line." The real crisis, then, is to get all these tapes distributed as widely and quickly as possible, to keep making more tapes, and, especially, to continue demanding that PBS begin to broadcast this kind of work immediately. For too long AIDS has been defined by a very small number of media professionals prone to ignorance or insidious biases, and it will take a multitude of us, even if we disagree on some points, to begin to challenge *their* deadly intransigence.

John Greyson is a film- and videomaker whose most recent tape is The ADS Epidemic.

© John Greyson 1988

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser. Listings do not constitute an endorsement & since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

ACADEMY OF MOTION PICTURE ARTS & SCIENCES ANNUAL STUDENT FILM AWARDS, June, California. Established in 1973, awards "encourage excellence in filmmaking by university & college students." Competition open to all students at accredited US colleges & universities, art & film schools. Film & video entries accepted in cats of animation, doc, dramatic & experimental. Prizes incl. trophies & $1000 cash grants, w/ up to 3 merit awards of $500 in each cat. Judging takes place in 4 regional semi-finals & finalists sent to LA to be voted upon by active Academy members. Winners flown to LA for awards ceremony & participate in seminars w/ industry professionals, meetings w/ awards alumni & tours of Hollywood studios & production facilities. Entries must be under 60 mins. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: Apr. 1. Contact: Student Film Awards, Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, 8949 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211-1972; (213) 278-8990.

MARGARET MEAD FILM FESTIVAL, September 26-29, New York. Country's premier showcase for anthropological films, fest focuses on docs which explore the many aspects of traditional & contemporary cultures. Several directors attend screenings of their films. Last yr, 51 films from 17 countries, on diverse topics such as Peruvian Indian ceremonies, Afro-Brazilian spirit healing, apartheid, Mongol nomads, Navajo crafts, an Orthodox Jewish community, "born again" Christians & Palestinian villages. American Federation of Arts mounted a 1st-time touring exhibition in '87 of 11 films representative of the fest's offerings, focusing on traditional arts. Screenings at American Museum of Natural History, which houses fest headquarters. Format: 35mm, 16mm; preselection on cassette. Deadline: Apr. 30. Contact: Malcolm Arth/Jonathan Stack, Margaret Mead Film Festival, American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St., New York, NY 10024; (212) 769-5305.

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON FAMILY RELATIONS MEDIA AWARDS COMPETITION, April-May, Missouri. 20th annual competition for films, filmstrips & videos on family issues, to be held at Univ. of Missouri. Competition cats. incl. human development, parenting, nontraditional family systems, marital issues & communication, sexuality, family planning, abuse & neglect, alcohol & drug abuse. Entries must have been released after Jan.1, 1987. Best of Category award. Entry fees: $55-185. Deadlines: Mar. 18 (1/2" & 35mm filmstrips); Apr. 11 (16mm). Contact: Marilyn Coleman, Dept. of Child & Family Development, 28 Stanley Hall, Univ. of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211; (314) 882-4360.

NEW JERSEY VIDEO & FILM FESTIVAL, June, New Jersey. Sponsored by Newark MediaWorks, this competitive fest, which recognizes outstanding NJ video & filmmaking, will celebrate its 5th anniv. this yr. Entries must have been produced by a NJ resident, shot in the state, or on a NJ subject, completed between '83 & '88. Awards given doc, video/film art, animation, community TV/public access & fiction cats. Fest presents Festival Showcase Tour of winning entries to museums, art centers & universities around NJ. Formats: 16mm, 3/4". Entry fee: $25. Deadline: Apr. 8. Contact: Dana Kenney/Tami Gold, Newark MediaWorks, Box 1716, Newark, NJ 07101; (201) 690-5474.

NISSAN FOCUS AWARDS, September, California. 12th annual nat'l competition for films & screenplays completed by college and university students; entries received from over 140 schools. Sponsored by Nissan Motor Corp, w/ awards sponsored by Amblin Entertainment, Great American Picture Show, Columbia Pictures, Universal Pictures, Dolby Laboratories, Max Factor & Eastman Kodak. Over $60,00 in cash awards & automobiles are given to finalists, who are flown to LA for tours, seminars & meetings w/ industry professionals. Cats incl. narrative films, documentaries, screenwriting, animated film, experimental films, editing, sound & cinematography. Films must have been completed in previous 2 yrs. Format: 16mm. Deadline: April. Contact: Sam Katz, Nissan Focus, 1140 Ave. of the Americas, New York, NY 10036; (212) 575-0270.

SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, June 17-26, California. Oldest & largest fest celebrating films & videos by & about lesbians & gay men, sponsored by Frameline, nonprofit lesbian & gay media arts org. Last yr's fest audiences numbered over 15,500. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4" & 1/2". Deadline: Apr. 1. Contact: Michael Lumpkin, Frameline, Box 14792, San Francisco, CA 94114; (415) 861-5245.

SINKING CREEK FILM & VIDEO CELEBRATION, June 11-18, Tennessee. Enthusiastic reviews have attended this fest for US independent & student features, documentaries & shorts since inception in 1970; filmmakers have praised commitment to & celebration of independent film. For the 1st time this yr (its19th) the fest will accept video (3/4") & judge it alongside 16mm entries. Cats: young filmmaker (up to age 18), college (grad & undergrad) & ind. filmmaker. $8000 in cash awards divided among the 3 cats. Entries must have been completed in preceding 2 yrs. No limit on number of entries. Entry fees, based on length—from $10 for shorts under 10 mins to $75 for features over 90 mins. Seminars on video production, animation & analysis & criticism scheduled. Formats: 16mm, 3/4". Deadlines (entries beginning Mar. 21): Apr. 15 for features & video; Apr. 22 for films under 60 mins. Contact: Mary Jane Coleman, director, Sinking Creek Film & Video Festival, Creekside Farm, 1250 Old Shiloh Rd., Greeneville, TN 37743; (615) 638-6524. Films/videos should be sent to Box 1056, Greeneville, TN 37744. For info on attending fest, contact: Sinking Creek, Sarratt Ctr., Vanderbilt Univ., Nashville, TN 37240; (615) 322-2471.

SLICE OF LIFE SHOWCASE, July 8-10, Pennsylvania. Seeks experimental or doc films depicting "unique performances of everyday life—those moments of truth & beauty which would otherwise go unrecognized." Sponsored by Documentary Resource Center. Fest hosts "meet the artists" reception & conferences. Cash prizes awarded & travel stipends given to participating filmmakers, accommodated in area homes.

Entry fee: $10. Format: 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: Apr. 1. Contact: Mike Bagwell/Carrie Compton, 740 Elmwood St., State College, PA 16801; (814) 234-7886.

WORKS BY WOMEN, October, New York. Since 1977, fest has promoted accomplishments of women directors in ind. film & video. Several directors attend fest & lead discussions about their work. Doc & fiction features & shorts accepted. Films & tapes will be rented. Formats: 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: Apr. 30. Contact: Christina Bickford, Media Services, Barnard College Library, Broadway at 117th St., New York, NY 10027-6598; (212) 280-2418.

FOREIGN

ADELAIDE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL FOR CHILDREN, June 20-25, Australia. Sponsored by South Australian Council for Children's Film & Television, competitive fest aims to showcase films that "entertain, inform & delight children" & promote closer relationships among children's filmmakers/orgs from all over the world. Films entered in age cats (4-7 yrs, 8-10 yrs, 11-13 yrs) & judged by int'l adult jury & children's jury; awards given to best feature & best short. Fest accepts films made for TV on 16mm & plans to establish special TV section. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Mar. 14. Contact: Eileen Sharman, fest director, Adelaide International Film Festival for Children, 59 S. Terrace, Adelaide, South Australia 5000; tel: (08) 51 3989.

BANFF TELEVISION FESTIVAL, June, Canada. Int'l event celebrating "excellence in television films & programs," held in popular mountain resort, brings together programming & TV professionals from over 20 countries for competition, seminars & on-demand screenings. Entries must be made for TV (no films in theatrical release prior to telecast); shown on TV for 1st time after Apr. '87 & be Canadian premieres. Cats: TV features, limited series, continuing series, drama specials, TV comedies, social & political docs, popular science programs, art docs, performance specials & children's programs. Producers of award-winning films receive Rockie bronze sculpture; directors receive certificates of excellence. Grand prize of $5000, 2 special awards of $2500. Entry fee: $125. Formats: 3/4"; 16mm may be entered, but will be transferred to cassette for viewing by jury. Contact: Banff Television Festival, Banff Centre, St. Julien Rd, Box 1020, Banff, Alberta, Canada T0L 0C0; (403) 762-3060; telex: 03-822804 TV FEST BNF.

BARCELONA INTERNATIONAL CINEMA WEEK, June 29-July 7, Spain. One of Spain's leading film events, which organizers have begun to revitalize after several lean yrs. Competitive section, offering awards in 4 cats, limited to European cinema (w/ $175,000 prize going to winning filmmaker's next production). Features, docs & shorts (under 30 min.), TV series, experimental accepted. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Apr. 30. Contact: Setmana International de Cinema de Barcelona, Av. Maria Cristina S/N, Palau No. 1, 08004 Barcelona, Spain; tel: (93) 223-8538/223-9900; telex 53117 FOIMB-E.

CANNES INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, May 11-24, France. W/ hundreds of new films plus rich & famous personalities, Cannes' impact on world cinema is se-

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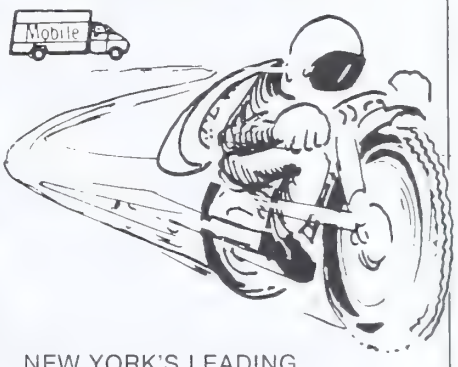
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CRACOW INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF SHORT FILMS, June, Poland. 25th yr. of competitive fest for films under 30 mins. Accepts doc, popular science, animated, experimental & featurette films. Entries cannot have received awards at another major int'l European fest & must be completed in preceding yr. Fest pays return shipping. Awards incl. Golden Dragon Grand Prix; 2 Golden Dragon special prizes; 4 Silver Dragon major prizes; Bronze Dragon for photography, screenplay & music (cash prizes accompany awards but are not convertible & must be spent in Poland). There is small market, initiated last yr, headed by Filmpolski sellers & buyers. Format: 35mm, 16mm (optical & magnetic). Deadline: Mar. 15. Contact: Cracow International Festival of Short Films, Pl. Zwyciestwa 9, Box127, 00-950 Warsaw, Poland; tel: 260451; telex: 813640 film pl.

MUNICH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, June, W. Germany. Extremely popular & receptive showcase for

independent films. Now in 6th yr, fest regularly featured salute to US independents. Last yr 120 films screened before audiences of over 100,000 at 11 theaters. 18 ind. features & several shorts shown & several directors attended. Fest sections: Int'l Program, Perspectives of Young European Film, New German Films, Independents, Documentaries & Children's Film Fest. Special features incl. doc seminar led by D.A. Pennebaker, black cinema headed by Albert Johnson & annual symposium on film & media law. Munich Film Exchange section provides venue for int'l contacts w/ buyers, sellers, producers & distributors. Video companies also attend w/ video premieres of theatrical films that have not found theatrical distributor. Fest receives wide German publicity. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: May 1. Contact: Ulla Rapp, Internationale Munchner Filmwochen GmbH, Turkenstrasse 93, 8000 Munich 40, W. Germany; tel: (089) 393011/12; telex: 5214674 imfd.

VELDEN AMATEUR FILM FESTIVAL OF NATIONS, June, Austria. Competitive event for 16mm & super 8 films by amateur & students. Films must be under 30 mins. Competition cats: doc, travel, games & genre (fantasy & experimental). Winning entries may screen on Austrian TV. Prizes awarded by Austrian Education & Art Minister, Governor of Carinthie, Mayor of Velden; also special awards. Deadline: Apr. 30. Contact: Velden Filmfestival der Nationen fur Filmamateure, Kurdirektion, A-9220 Velden am Woerther See, Austria; tel: (04274) 2105; telex: 4294515.

VENICE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, September, Italy. Oldest int'l film fest in the world (Mussolini founded it), now entering its 45th yr. Last yr newly streamlined edition inaugurated in order to highlight films shown; only 65 films were screened in & out of competition, 3 each day. The all-features fest is invitational. Cats incl. main competition which will present major films of '88; out-of-competition section; int'l critics' week; retrospective (last yr. featured the films of Joseph Mankiewicz) & special event screenings (last yr. featured homages to Bertolucci & Cinecitta). 12-member int'l jury awards Golden Lion for best film, Silver Lion, special grand jury award, awards for best actor & actress & Italian Senate Prize. Other awards go to best screenplay, music, cinematography, art direction & costumes; special critics' prizes also awarded. Fest receives very heavy Italian & int'l press coverage. Participating films must be subtitled in Italian at presenter's expense; presenters also responsible for round-trip shipping. Must be 1st release outside country of origin & 1st fest showing. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: May 30 (by invitation). Contact: La Biennale di Venezia, Settore Cinema e Spettacolo Televisivo, Ca' Giustinian, San Marco, 30100 Venice, Italy; tel: (902) 422-3429; telex: 01921800.

WELLINGTON FILM FESTIVAL, July, New Zealand. Run in tandem w/ Auckland Film Fest; shares many of the same films. Fest noncompetitive & features sell out screenings to audiences of over 100,000. NZ premieres & diverse int'l program of about 50 features, docs & shorts which may not otherwise have been seen in NZ. Entries must have been accepted & shown at another fest or fests outside of NZ. All films receive certificate of participation. Fest organizers assist w/ sales to TV, film libraries & distributors. Return shipping paid. This will be fest's 17th yr. Formats: 35mm (preferred); 16mm. Deadline: Apr. 30. Contact: Bill Gosden, director, Wellington Film Festival, Box 9544, Courtenay Place, Wellington, New Zealand; tel: 850-162; telex: NZ 30386 FILMCOM Attn: Fedfilm.

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East meets West, as the Soviet Union's best-known jazz combo, the Ganelin Trio, admire some graffiti during their tour of the U.S., documented by filmmaker Jacki Ochs in *Jazz Summit*.

Courtesy filmmaker

Renee Tajima

Principal photography has been completed on **A Question of Color**, Kathe Sandler's documentary exploring attitudes of skin color, hair texture, and facial features in the black community. In production for over three years, the one-hour film examines "color consciousness" from slavery to the present, largely through personal testimonies of black Americans from all backgrounds, using historical footage as well. Despite the controversial nature of the subject, Sandler was able to secure funding from a number of different sources, including the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the District of Columbia Community Humanities Committee, and the American Film Institute. Completion funds were recently awarded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. *A Question of Color:* Kathe Sandler, 736 West End Ave., #1B, New York, NY 10025; (212) 864-4343.

The grande dame of experimental theater, Ellen Stewart, and her off-off Broadway venue La Mama are the subjects of a documentary-in-progress, **Mama's Pushcart**, by producer Louise Diamond, director Demetria Royals, and associate director/producer Rene Cruz. Cultural performers from over 50 nations have been hosted at La Mama, from Argentina to Yugoslavia, the Philippines, and the Ivory Coast. In the words of Tony Award winner Harvey Fierstein, Stewart and La Mama have originated "eighty percent of what is now considered American theater." The producers received seed monies from the Public Broadcasting Service to produce the full-length video, in celebration of La Mama's twenty-fifth anniversary season. Interviews for the program will include a remarkable roll call of La Mama artists, including Sam Shepard, Lanford Wilson, Elizabeth Swados, Tom O'Horgan, and Joseph Chaikin, as well as Stewart herself. Shooting will take place on location in and around the La Mama theaters in New York's Lower East Side using a Betacam ENG/EFP package. *Mama's Pushcart:* Diamond Royals Productions, 47 Great Jones St., New York, NY 10017; (212) 254-3840.

America's philanthropic institutions have supported the work of film- and videomakers for a number of years, but have rarely been the object of the camera's eye. Albert Maysles and Susan Froemke have just completed a new documentary, **Foundations: The People and the Money**, a 28-minute behind-the-scenes account of the little known organizations that donate billions of dollars each year to support education, health, the arts, human services, and civil causes. The film highlights the activity of the Rockefeller family, featuring a discussion between the two David Rockefellers, Sr. and Jr. *Foundations* also looks at the programs these funds benefit, including a New York City center for homeless children in a welfare hotel and the home of a family confronting the farm crisis in the Midwest. The three-year project was administered by a steering committee comprising leaders in the philanthropic community and received funding from 30 foundations. The film can be borrowed for free by nonprofit groups around the country and is available on both film and tape. *Foundations: The People and The Money:* Karol Media, 22 Riverview Dr., Wayne, NJ 07470.

Longtime San Francisco filmmaker George Kuchar just premiered his humorous and touching video diary, **Video Album 5: The Thursday People**, at the American Film Institute's Video Festival in Los Angeles. The tape was shot on a Sony 8mm camcorder, with the editing and music track done on-the-spot, using in-camera picture and audio editing. The one-hour documentary was made for a few dollars, and demonstrates the remarkable potential for 8mm video. *The Thursday People* follows Kuchar on his daily travels in and around the Bay Area, colored by his funny, off-camera commentary, focusing on the last days of filmmaker Curt McDowell, who died of AIDS last year. *Video Album 5: The Thursday People*: George Kuchar, 3434 A 19th St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 431-8110.

Deborah Shaffer's new documentary takes its name and inspiration from **Fire from the Mountain: The Making of a Sandinista**, the autobiography of Nicaraguan revolutionary and writer Omar Cabezas. The one-hour film recounts Cabezas' extraordinary life: his "coming of age" under the Somoza dictatorship and transformation into a guerrilla fighter with Sandinista forces in their mountain strongholds. Rare images and archival footage shows Cabezas at the center of the revolution's milestones: leading student demonstrations during the turbulent sixties as well as leading troops to victory in Managua during July 1979 when Somoza's regime fell. The film was produced by Academy Award-winning director Shaffer and Adam Friedson, in association with the Common Sense Foundation. *Fire from the Mountain:* Common Sense Foundation, 3971 1/2 Beethoven St., Los Angeles, CA 90066; (213) 822-9659.

Filmmaker Stanley Nelson has been recognized by the Borough of Manhattan president

David Dinkins for his new one-hour documentary, **Two Dollars and a Dream: The Story of Madame C.J. and A'Lelia Walker**. Born to impoverished ex-slaves only two years after emancipation, Madame C.J. Walker was orphaned at six-years-old, married at the age of 14, and widowed by 20. But she eventually went on to become America's "first Black millionairess." She founded her own manufacturing company, developing 23 cosmetic products, from hair straighteners to toothpaste. Madame Walker was also known as a great philanthropist, who ultimately left one-third of the Walker Company to charity upon her death. Her daughter A'Lelia inherited the stewardship of the company and went on to play a key role in the Harlem Renaissance. She was known for her salon where, as Langston Hughes described it, "Negro poets and Negro numbers bankers mingled with downtown poets and seat-on-the-stock-exchange racketeers." Nelson tells this colorful story through oral histories, photos, and vintage film footage, including a 1928 documentary produced by the Walker Company about its history that was recently restored by the American Film Institute. *Two Dollars and a Dream:* Stanley Nelson and Associates, 324 Convent Ave., New York, NY 10031; (213) 690-4613.

Richard Boehm has just completed a new 26-minute documentary about the world of reusable materials. In **Junkyard Journeys** Boehm profiles people like the artists, aluminum can collectors, and car restoration buffs whose work combines ecology and economics. One man supports his family by selling the cardboard he collects on his pick-up truck. In another scene a building is dismantled brick by brick so that materials can be sold for future construction projects. *Junkyard Journey* is the third of Boehm's three-part *Outlaw Economics* series, which profiles a new breed of capitalist entrepreneurs who earn their living on the fringes of the U.S. economy. Part one, *Sold America*, profiles California's marijuana growers who earn thousands of dollars by illegally cultivating the state's number one cash crop. The second segment, entitled *Las Vegas Odds*, describes the lives of professional sports gamblers. *Junkyard Journey:* Richard Boehm, 1218 Victoria Ave., Venice, CA 90291; (213) 391-7058.

In production for nearly three years, Liane Brandon's new documentary **How to Prevent a Nuclear War** premiered last fall at the Brattle Theater in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The 32-minute film is an up-beat look at the kinds of activities that anyone can participate in to lessen the threat of nuclear war. It captures the spirit and commitment of 15 people of different ages, races, and backgrounds involved in grassroots anti-nuclear organizing, such as a suburban housewife and the founder of the Vernon Jones Gospel Singers, an inner-city gospel choir. The film also features a special appearance by musical satirist Tom Lehrer. *How to Prevent a Nuclear War:* New Day Films, 22 Riverside Dr., Wayne, NJ 07470; (201) 633-0212.



Pinky is one of three runaway teens who discuss their histories of incest, abuse, and family neglect in Kate Davis' feature-length documentary *Girltalk*.

Courtesy filmmaker

Lori Tsang has completed a 25-minute black and white film, **Chinaman's Choice**, based on the experiences of her father, Alfred Tsang. The film combines narrative and documentary styles to evoke a Chinese American's impressions of the past and his decision to stay in the United States. Tsang grew up in China, but returned to the U.S. at the age of 14, when the Japanese invaded Guandong Province in 1938. He quit high school to enlist with the U.S. Army Air Corps and participated in the bombing of Japan as a navigator on a B-29, going on to become the deputy attorney general for the state of Indiana. In *Chinaman's Choice*, Tsang explores her father's memories of childhood in China and the trauma of his wartime experiences. Scenes from everyday life are interwoven with narration, the poetry of Chinese writer Stephen Liu, and an original score by jazz and classical musican Brother Ah, a.k.a. Robert Northern. The film premiered at Washington, D.C.'s Biograph Theatre last September. *Chinaman's Choice:* Cinethesis Productions, 3217 Connecticut Ave., NW, #34, Washington, DC 20008; (202) 357-8463; (202) 244-2561.

Girltalk, a feature length documentary about girls who run away from home, screened last October at the Independent Feature Film Market. Producer/director Kate Davis portrays three girls from varied class and ethnic backgrounds to relate their family histories of neglect and incest: Pinky, a 14-year-old Latina whose father left home and whose mother is determined to be a "neglectful parent" by the court; Mars, who grew up in a suburban, midwestern town, leaving home at 13 when her father threatened to take her to a motel and "break her in right" and now works as a stripper in Boston; and Martha, a 19-year-old in the final month of pregnancy, who was sexually abused from the age of six and has lived in over 20 homes and institutions. In the film, the birth of Martha's child and her recitations of her own poetry echo the pain and strength of all three stories. *Girltalk* also screened at the Montreal International Festival of New Cinema. *Girltalk:* Kate Davis, 215 W. 101st St., #7A, New York, NY 10025; (212) 663-5114.

Kosygin backed it, Krushchev denounced it, Andropov liked it, and Stalin had many of its adherents killed. Jazz, America's best known cultural export, reached the Soviet Union in 1922 where it instantly took root despite harsh criticism. In **Jazz Summit** filmmaker Jacki Ochs looks at jazz, Soviet style, in an era of *glasnost*. Following two trips to the Soviet Union, where she met and taped jazz and rock musicians, Ochs grabbed the opportunity to document the first trip of a Soviet jazz group, the Ganelin Trio, to the United States. At the center of the half-hour video documentary is this foremost avant-garde jazz group in the USSR and their performances across the country. Ochs hopes that *Jazz Summit* will dislodge U.S. attitudes about Russians—through the power of music. *Jazz Summit:* Human Arts Association, 591 Broadway, New York, NY 10012; (212) 925-7995.

Brooklyn-based filmmaker Jem Cohen has released a documentary "history" of New York City, from prehistoric times through the space age. **This Is a History of New York**, a 23-minute black and white film, uses documentary street footage to study the radically different worlds within the city's five boroughs. Divided into seven sections, the film concentrates on the interaction between street life and architecture. The section of the prehistoric period, for example, was largely filmed in the abandoned waterfronts of Brooklyn, while "The Age of Reason" captures Wall Street perched ominously before the crash of 1987. Cohen, who is distributing the film on video, premiered it at Hallwalls in Buffalo in a show curated by artist Robert Longo. *This Is a History of New York:* Bedlam Films, 43 Grand St., #3, Brooklyn, NY 11211; (718) 387-7580.

The Laser Man, a high-tech comedy that pays tribute to the innovative and technological vitality of America, has wrapped principal photography in New York. The second feature film by *A Great Wall* director Peter Wang, *Laser Man* is a comedy thriller set in the near future, revolving around a dedicated and naive scientist named Arthur

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Weiss, played by Japanese American actor Marc Hayashi. Weiss discovers too late that his research is being funded by political assassins led by the villain Hanson (George Bartenieff). As the intrigue unfolds, one by one Arthur's family and friends become implicated. The humorous and provocative film weaves personal, political, and cultural motifs. With a multi-ethnic cast, it dramatizes racial stereotypes and cultural differences and explores ways diverse cultures can coexist in an ever-modernizing America. *The Laser Man:* 465 Broome St., 4th fl., New York, NY 10012; (212) 966-5773.

Gorman Bechard, Kristine Covello, and Kathy Milani have just completed work on a one-hour documentary, **Twenty Questions**. The film, which deals with life, death, and just about everything, was shot on an almost nonexistent budget. In it, 19 people from all walks of life were chosen at random, and locked in a room for about 11 minutes (the length of one roll of 16mm film), during which time they were asked 20 questions, ranging from "What do you do when you discover your lover has AIDS?" to "Fur coats?" to "The contents of your refrigerator's bottom shelf?" The subjects ranged from a 14-year-old parochial school student to a housewife, patrol officer, and everything in between. *Twenty Questions* was produced by the makers of *B-Movie. Twenty Questions:* Generic Films, Box 2715, Waterbury, CT 06723; (203) 756-3017.

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NAMAC CONFERENCE: The 1988 Nat'l Alliance of Media Arts Centers' annual conference will be held in conjunction w/ 12th Atlanta Film & Video Festival, May 18-21 at the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia. Main theme: Media Arts Exhibition, w/ AFVF screenings held each evening. Topics incl. marketing/publicity/audience development; info services; criticism/program notes/aesthetics of media arts; artists' concerns; exhibition technology/hardware; intermedia arts. Contact: NAMAC, c/o IMAGE Film/Video Ctr., 75 Bennett St., NW, Ste. M-1, Atlanta, GA 30309; (404) 352-4225.

VOLUNTEER LAWYERS FOR THE ARTS: Upcoming seminars incl.: not-for-profit incorporation, Mar. 2, 16 & 30; Accountants for the Public Interest & VLA payroll & govt. reporting requirements, Mar. 21. Contact: VLA, 1285 Ave. of the Americas, 3rd fl., New York, NY 10019; (212) 977-9270.

COLLECTIVE FOR LIVING CINEMA: Film workshops in sound recording techniques, Mar. 12 & 13; 16mm editing, Mar. 19, 20, 26 & 27; Optical Printing, Mar. 26, 27 & 29. Contact: Collective, 41 White St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 925-3926.

CABLE IN THE CITY: 3rd annual conference of Video Metro NYC to be held Mar. 24, 9-3pm at Borough of Manhattan Community College, 199 Chambers St., New York, NY 10007. Will address issues surrounding cable TV industry in NYC in anticipation of wiring of all 5 boros. Contact: James Pawlak, Conf. Dir., (212) 618-1832.

18th ANNUAL
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An annual market for Producers & Distributors of non-theatrical films & videos. Both finished works and works in progress accepted.

For entry forms and Information:
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PROFESSIONAL VIDEO TRAINING PROGRAM: Borough of Manhattan Community College has expanded course offerings in program that retrains film professionals to work in video. Offers new on-line A/B edit suite, video graphics lab & seminars in managing small businesses. All courses & materials free to students. Contact: Dean Sandra Poster; (212) 618-1573 or Emily Armstrong, (212) 618-1387/88, BMCC, 199 Chambers St., New York, NY 10007; (212) 618-1605.

PIONEERING DOCUMENTARIANS will discuss the documentary form at 2-day seminar presented by Global Village in cooperation w/ Media Studies Program at New School. Held at May Theater, 66 5th Ave., Parsons Bldg., Apr. 9 & 10, 10-5 pm. Cost: $150. Preregistration or AIVF members, $125. Contact: Global Village; (212) 966-7526.

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE: Seminars in March: Financing Options, Mar. 12, Writers Guild Theater, 135 S. Doheny Dr., Los Angeles; Art of Prod. Design, Mar. 12 & 13 & Nuts & Bolts of Video Postproduction, Mar. 5, AFI Campus, Los Angeles; Actors' Workshop: Choosing an Agent, Mar. 5, Mark Goodson Theater, Dept. of Cultural Affairs, 2 Columbus Circle, NYC; Financing & Marketing Independent Film & Video, Mar. 5 & Art of Film Direction, Mar. 12 & 13, Shoreline Community College, 16101 Greenwood Ave. N, Seattle, WA.; Film Scheduling & Budgeting, Mar. 12 & 13, Holiday Inn, 801 Calhoun St., Houston, TX. Contact: AFI, Box 27999, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027; (800) 221-6248; (213) 856-7690.

ART HAZARDS SYMPOSIUM: Call for papers for Safety Issues in the Practices of Art & Art Conservation symposium to be held at American Chemical Society Annual Mtg., Sept. 25-30 in LA. Deadline: Apr. 30 for notification of intent & May 15 for abstract. Contact: Mary Virginia Orna, Box 12233, Nat'l Institute for Environmental Health Sciences, Mail Drop 10-03, Research Triangle Park, NC 27709; (919) 541-3259.

ITS/NATPE 1ST INT'L TELEPRODUCTION CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION will be held June 25-28 at Los Angeles Convention-Exhibition Ctr. Contact: Susan Stanco, ITS Dir. of Conference Marketing, Int'l Teleproduction Society, 990 6th Ave., Ste. 21E, New York, NY 10018; (212) 629-3266.

CANADIAN INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO ALLIANCE: Annual general mtg. to be held June 1-4 in Vancouver. Contact: Martine Sauvageau, (514) 277-0328, coordinator, or Peg Cambell, (604) 669-3253, dir. of the board.

UNION FOR DEMOCRATIC COMMUNICATIONS: Annual conferenc—Communication, Culture, Socialism—to be held at Carleton Univ., Ottawa, Canada, Apr. 28-May 1. Contact: Centre for Communication, Culture & Society, Carleton Univ., Ottawa, Ontario, K15 5B6, Canada; (613) 564-7432.

Films • Tapes Wanted

THE MEDIA SHOW, Channel 4 magazine-format program dealing with film, TV, press, advertising & print, seeks films/tapes. Please send videos or proposals for work-in-progress to: Kate Newington, Wall to Wall Television Ltd., 1 Richmond Mews, Off Nead St., London W1V 5AG, England.

EZTV Video Center seeks independent work in all genres for its regular screening program. 3/4" preferred, any length, but especially interested in long-form (feature-length) or multi-disciplinary pieces. Send tapes & SASE to: Screening Committee, EZTV, 8547 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90069.

C.A.G.E. SEEKS proposals for 1988-89 video art programming year for tapes by individuals & new projects by curators. Honorarium &/or tape rental available for selected artists & curators. Contact: James Duesing, C.A.G.E., 344 W. 4th St., Cincinnati, OH 45202; (513) 381-2437.

NEW DAY FILMS, self-distribution coop for independent producers, seeks new members w/ recent social issue doc. Priority areas: culture, environment, family, gay/lesbian, health, disabilities, labor, minority. Also young adult issues/progressive films for young people. Appl. deadline: Apr. 1. Contact: Ralph Arlyck, 79 Raymond Ave., Poughkeepsie, NY 12601.

SUBMIT VIDEOS TO INFERMENTAL-TOKYO, independent int'l video program edited in different country each yr. Max. length, 10 mins. Works for touring exhibition paid initial 7,000 yen, plus 50% of rental, sale, or broadcast proceeds shared equally among artists. Overall theme: "In the Afterglow of TV Land." Subjects: Godzilla, Infomania (media addiction), Limbo Hour (the variety show as the resting place of TV ghosts), Canned Laughter, Broadcast Shadows (marginalization/colonization of viewers through image selection/presentation). Send tapes w/ SASE to: Infermental-Tokyo, Media Mix, 1-14-14 Tomigaya, 2F, Shibuya, Tokyo 151, Japan; 81(3)485-7011 or Infermental-Vancouver, c/o Hank Bull, Western Front, 303 E. 8th Ave., Vancouver, BC V5T 1S1, Canada; (604) 876-1548.

CITYCHANNEL 8: Govt communications cable channel for the city of W. Hollywood, CA seeks programs for '88 schedule, in 3/4" video or 16mm film. Contact: Jon Merritt, Citychannel 8, City Hall, 8611 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90069-4109; (213) 854-7471.

ZIEMAN PRODUCTIONS creates music videos using stock footage & recut films. Interested in buying nonexclusive rights for film footage to use in videos. Looking for quality dramatic, dance, performance, industrials w/ dramatic or illustrative scenes suitable for use in rock, country, blues, pop & show-tune music videos. Pay competitive rates for footage & will supply 1" master, if usable. Contact: John Hession; (212) 529-1254 or send short description to Zieman Prods, 2 Bleecker St., New York, NY 10012.

INDEPENDENT EYE, KQED-San Francisco's monthly showcase for film & videomakers, seeks works 1-20 min. long that fuse performing arts & TV broadcast. Dance, music, comedy, theater, performance & video/film art pieces welcome. Traditional doc format not acceptable. For appl. contact: KQED, 500 8th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-2269.

THE TERMINAL: New gallery/performance space seeks experimental films for monthly screenings. Objective to show film artists' work to dance/performance/fine artists & create a new outlet for experimental filmmakers. Contact: Suzanne Boucher (212) 254-5958 or Terminal (718) 783-8946.

DISTRIBUTOR seeks ind. films & videos for health care & library markets, particularly work dealing w/ maternal/child health, nutrition & handicaps. Offering effective direct mail promo. Contact: Motion, Inc. (202) 363-9450.

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SCREENPLAYS WANTED: Completed low-budget feature film screenplays of all types. Please submit w/ a synopsis or treatment & SASE to: Richard Dietz, 1356 Whispering Springs Cr., Palatine, IL 60074.

MEDIA INTERNSHIPS AVAILABLE. Women Make Movies, a nonprofit feminist media distr. organization, is now seeking interns or work/study students for work as distrib., promotion & program ass'ts. Contact: Celia Chong, WMM, 225 Lafayette St., Rm. 211, New York, NY 10012; (212) 925-0606.

VIDEO/FILM ARTIST: Several positions anticipated in Visual Arts Dept. of UC/San Diego. Seeks video/filmmaker who has made a distinctive & original contribution to the field. Must have broad knowledge & work experience. Substantial exhibition record & college teaching exp. required. Part-time or possibly full-time position(s) to replace faculty on leave for the '88-89 academic yr. Write: David Antin, chair, Visual Arts (B-027), Univ. of Calif., San Diego, La Jolla, CA 92093.

VIDEO EDITOR/SHOOTER: Public Interest Video Network seeks experienced & highly creative doc. editor to become part of award-winning team. Assist in all phases of planning & prod., strong technical skills & imagination imperative. Experience w/ graphics, camera & sound, writing & producing skills a plus. Must have good interpersonal skills. Help meet challenges of creating compelling issue-oriented programs. Resumé & reel to D. Murton, PIVN, 2309 18th St. NW, Washington, DC 20009.

CATNIP: If you enjoy traveling & wish to connect with other artists while you do so, then Creative Artists Travel Network-Int'l Program may interest you. Contact: Sara Fox, Box 574963, Orlando, FL 32857-4963.

Publications • Software

PHILADELPHIA FILM OFFICE PUBLICATIONS: *The Reel Philadelphia: A Guide to City Services*; *Philadelphia Prod. Manual*, 2nd Edition & *Philadelphia Film Investment Newsletter*. Contact: Philadelphia Film Office, 120 Municipal Services Bldg., Philadelphia, PA 19102; (215) 686-2668.

WOMEN MAKE MOVIES: 15th anniv. catalogue available. More than 100 titles, largest collection of films & videos by & about women in the US. Contact: WMM, 225 Lafayette St., Rm. 211, New York, NY 10012; (212) 925-0606.

FIAT LUX: Program of super 8/8mm experimental films from US now available for exhibition. Curated by Al Nigrin & cosponsored by Int'l Ctr. for 8mm Film & Video (Somerville, MA) & MediaMix (New Brunswick, NJ). Films by Gary Adelstein, Bob Brodsky & Toni Treadway, Marjorie Keller, Richard Lerman, Dennis Lipp, A.G. Nigrin, Owen O'Toole, Jerry Orr, M.E. Sokolowski, Scott Stark, Willie Varela, Jacalyn White & Darrell Wilson. Available for rental in 3/4" U-Matic or 1/2" VHS. Contact: Al Nigrin, Light Pharmacy Films, 5 S. Adelaide Ave., Highland Park, NJ 08904; (201) 249-9623.

ART OF FILING: Tax workbook for visual, performing & literary artists & other self-employed professionals now available from Resources & Counseling, United Arts. Cost: $12.95/ea. (MN residents add 6% tax), plus $1.50 postage & handling. Make check payable to United Arts, R&C/UA, 411 Landmark Ctr., 75 W. 5th St., St. Paul, MN 55102; (612) 292-4381.

COMPOSITION: CANADIAN INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO QUARTERLY: Subscriptions: $6/yr individuals, $10/yr institutions. Contact: Composition, Box 115, 260 Adelaide E., Toronto, Ontario, M5A 1NO, Canada.

NFCB'S FAIRNESS DOCTRINE FORUM: 1st in series of forums in *Community Radio Monthly* discusses fairness doctrine. Available from National Federation of Community Broadcasters; (202) 797-8911.

Resources • Funds

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES: Next deadline for humanities projects in media: Mar. 18. Contact: James Dougherty, Media Program. Also, RFP for Planning Grants for Public Programs on the Columbian Quincentenary, incl. symposia, film series w/ colloquia, panel exhibits, etc. that bring humanities to general public. Contact: Public Humanities Projects, Columbian Quincentenary, Planning Grants, Division of General Programs, Rm. 426, NEH, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 786-0378.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING'S Open Solicitation deadline: Apr. 22. For appls, contact: CPB, 1111 16th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 955-5100.

INTERMEDIA ARTS MINNESOTA: Grants to Interdisciplinary Artists program funded by NEA & Rockefeller Fnd. awards $2,500 to $7,000 for works involving 2 or more art forms, to artists from MN, IA, ND, SD & WI. Contact: Al Kosters, Intermedia Arts MN, 425 Ontario St., SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414; (612) 627-4444.

JEROME MEDIA ART INSTALLATION COMMISSIONS. funded by Jerome Foundation & administered by Intermedia Arts MN, award $2000 to 3 emerging artists. Installations will be exhibited for 1 mo. at Intermedia Arts Gallery. Deadline: March 18. For guidelines & appl., contact: John Maliga, Intermedia Arts MN, 425 Ontario St., SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414; (612) 627-4444.

MIDATLANTIC ARTS FOUNDATION: Visual Arts Residency Program appl. deadline: July 15. Contact: Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation, 11 E. Chase St., Ste. 1A, Baltimore, MD 21202; (301) 539-6656.

NEW YORK COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES: Proposals for project support deadline: June 1. Contact: NYCH, 198 Broadway, 10th fl., New York, NY 10038; (212) 233-1131.

REAL ART WAYS Audio & Video Access Center available to ind. producers. Multi-track recording studio & 3/4" shooting & editing video facility. Subsidies offered for portion of user cost. Consultation, production & technical assistance also provided. Contact: Marty Fegy, technical director or Victor Velt, video curator, Real Art Ways, 94 Allyn St., Hartford, CT, 06103-1402.

RISCA DEADLINES: Rhode Island State Council on the Arts project support appl. deadline: Mar. 1; individual fellowships, Mar. 15; general operating support, Apr. 15. Contact: RISCA, 312 Wickenden St., Providence, RI 02903.

SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION Grant deadlines: May 15 & Aug. 15 for individuals & orgs. Contact: SC Arts Comm., 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201; (803)734-8696.

APPARATUS PRODUCTIONS, nonprofit org, seeks scripts for short exp. narrative films planned for prod. in spring '88. For appl. send SASE to 225 Lafayette, Rm. 507, New York, NY 10012.

FILM/VIDEO PROJECT SPONSORSHIP: Collective for Living Cinema serves as nonprofit sponsorship organization for selected film & video projects. For information & guidelines contact: Jack Walsh, Collective for Living Cinema, 41 White St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 925-3926.

THE WOMEN'S PROJECT of the Paul Robeson Fund for Film & Video will award $50,000 in grants to women film- and videomakers for all phases of production & distribution. No student productions, unless copyright owned by director, and no male codirectors. Deadline: March 7. For appl. contact: The Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, New York, NY 10012; for info, call Lillian Jimenez at (212) 292-0062.

Trims & Glitches

KUDOS to Demetria Royals & Louise Diamond of Rebekah Films for New York State Council on the Arts grant & Global Village artist-in-residency to Royals for their project.

REYNOLD WEIDENAAR'S *The Thundering Scream of the Seraphim's Delight* was awarded Certificate of Merit at 23rd Chicago Int'l Film Festival & received Work of Special Distinction Award at 10th Tokyo Video Festival. Congratulations!

KUDOS to Nina Menkes, who was awarded Special Jury Prize for *Magdalena Viraga* at 3rd Annual Festival International de Cinema de Troia in Portugal.

WATER BABY: EXPERIENCES OF WATER BIRTH has won honors at Columbus Video Festival & International Film & TV Festival for its producer/director Karil Daniels. Congrats!

CONGRATULATIONS to Marlon Riggs, who earned 1987 MAMA Award for independent film & video for his tape *Ethnic Notions*.

KUDOS to Ellen Meyers, whose documentary *Just Keep Going* earned gold plaque at Chicago Int'l Film Festival & Gold Medal for Best Documentary at CAN Fest sponsored by Illinois Community Television Association.

KUDOS to *Ordinary People* series on Learning Channel, nominated for ACE award as best informational documentary series. 2nd ACE nomination went to John O'Neal for best dramatic writing for *Junebug Jabbo Jones*, an independent work produced by Stevenson Palfi which was shown as part of *Ordinary People*.

KUDOS to AIVF members awarded production grants from New York Council on the Humanities: Yvonne Rainer & Berenice Reynaud for Sexism, Colonialism, Misrepresentation: A Corrective Film Series, Stephanie Black for *The Hands That Feed Us* & Amy Chen for *McCarthyism & Chinatown.*

CONGRATS to AIVF members accepted into American Film Institute's Directing Workshop for Women: Doris Chase, Mary Dore, Lucy Winer & alternates Micki Dickoff, Sharon Greytak & Julia Robinson.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, an information clearinghouse, and a grant making program. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, foundations and organizations: The New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, the Governor's Office of Motion Picture and Television Development, the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, the Consolidated Edison Company of New York, the Benton Foundation, the Funding Exchange, and the dozens of organizations that advertise in *The Independent.*

MEMBER DISCOUNTS

AIVF is pleased to announce a discount program of film ansd video production services for its members. The companies listed below will offer discounts to AIVF members upon presentation of a membership card. We hope that this program will foster closer cooperation between independent producers & companies that provide production services.

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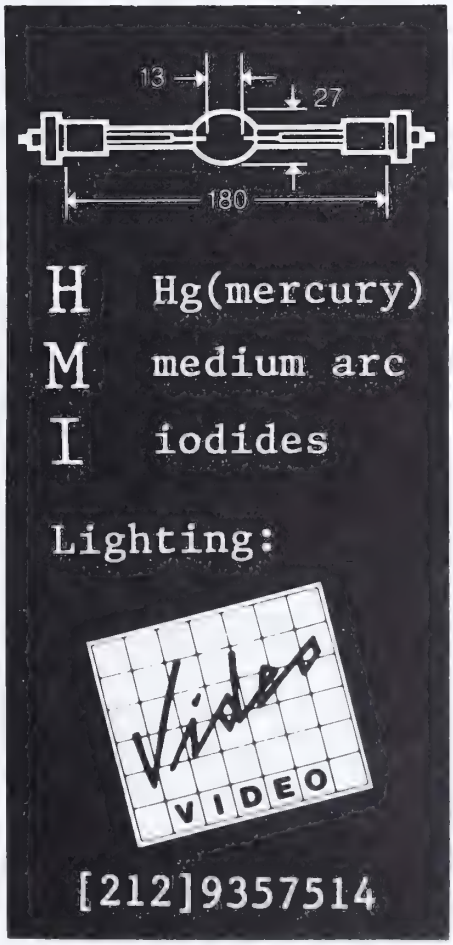
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MINUTES OF THE AIVF/FIVF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

At its meeting on December 12, 1987, the AIVF Board of Directors elected officers, installed two former alternate members to full board positions, established a task force to improve the organization's communications with its membership and to increase its visibility in the industry, and undertook to identify potential AIVF regional representatives around the country. In addition, the board was advised that the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation had granted AIVF's affiliate, the Foundation for Independent Video and Film, $15,000 for the publication of a national independent producer directory.

As a preliminary matter, independent producer Rachel Field and syndicator/distributor Richard Lorber—first and second alternates following last summer's election—were shifted to full AIVF board duties, while board members Tom Luddy (Zoetrope Productions) and John Taylor Williams (an entertainment lawyer from Boston) were transfered to the FIVF board.

The first item of new business was the election of officers. Documentary producer Robert Richter was re-elected president of the board. Loni Ding, a San Francisco independent, was elected to the position of vice president. Rachel Field was elected chairperson. Wendy Lidell, an international film packager and former AIVF Festival Bureau director, was appointed secretary. Richard Lorber will serve as treasurer. The board also formally reappointed Lawrence Sapadin as executive director.

The full board took the opportunity to formally support, upon the recommendation of the Advocacy and Executive Committees, advocacy to create a National Independent Program Service dedicated exclusively to the production, acquisition, distribution, and promotion of independently produced programs for public television, and the legislative guarantee for the minority programming consortia. These positions had been approved earlier by AIVF's Executive Committee.

The board also unanimously agreed to continue FIVF's Donor-Advised Film and Video Fund. The fund was established in 1987 on a pilot basis to assist foundations interested in funding media projects. In September 1987 the fund distributed $40,000 from the Benton Foundation and the Beldon Fund for media projects on the subjects of peace and the environment. In 1988, the Benton Foundation will also be seeking to fund media projects that address the role of media in society. FIVF expects to increase the fund for 1988 by encouraging other foundations to participate.

The board discussed its role in selecting award winners for the 1988 Indie Awards. In the past, while nominations were solicited from AIVF members, the board exercised discretion in the final selection and permitted itself, in exceptional circumstances, to add nominations during the deliberation process. The board resolved, in the interest of clarity, to advise AIVF members that the awards are made at the discretion of the board based upon, but not necessarily limited to, nominations by members.

The board established a Task Force on Public Relations to explore ways in which AIVF can improve communications about its services and activities with its members, and increase its visibility in the industry. This Task Force will review proposals with staff and make recommendation at the June board meeting.

In a related move, the board created another informal committee to look into the feasibility of identifying and selecting regional AIVF representatives, on a volunteer basis, to promote membership outside of the New York Metropolitan area.

Staff reports included news from executive director Lawrence Sapadin that the MacArthur Foundation had granted FIVF $15,000 to publish a directory of independent producers and their skills. *Independent* editor Martha Gever reported that the magazine was seeking a new advertising representative; *Independent* managing editor Pat Thomson reported that, based upon the readers' survey included in *The Independent* last summer, the magazine has a readership of approximately 18,000—greater than anticipated. Festival Bureau director Kathryn Bowser reported that the 1986-1988 edition of the *AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals* is ready for production and will be available this winter. Financial manager Morton Marks reported that AIVF/FIVF can now take payment for all transactions by Mastercard or Visa. Seminar director Ethan Young announced that AIVF has begun a national marketing effort to distribute tapes of its seminars and panel discussions and distributed audiocassettes of a recent seminar to the board.

The next meeting of the board is scheduled for March 19, 1988, at AIVF's offices. AIVF members are welcome to attend. Telephone in advance to confirm time and place.

CORRECTIONS

Two lines were inadvertently dropped from Deirdre Tower's article in the December issue of *The Independent*, "Pas de Deux: Choreographers and Producers Pair Up at Sundance." The top of the middle column on page nine should read: "There was a cry for a stronger vision from many of the artists." The beginning of the adjacent column should read: "Blumberg chose to develop a piece revolving around giant bubbles with a maximum lifespan of about 20 seconds. Known for his films on such oddities as Eskimo Olympics, elephant races, and double Dutch jump-rope contests, Blumberg found the Sundance experience to be greatly rewarding." We apologize for the omission.

In an item in "Media Clips" in the December 1987 issue of *The Independent*, we erroneously noted Sam Brody's date of birth as September 8, 1907; Brody was born on January 1, 1907.

ADVOCACY SUPPORT GOES ON

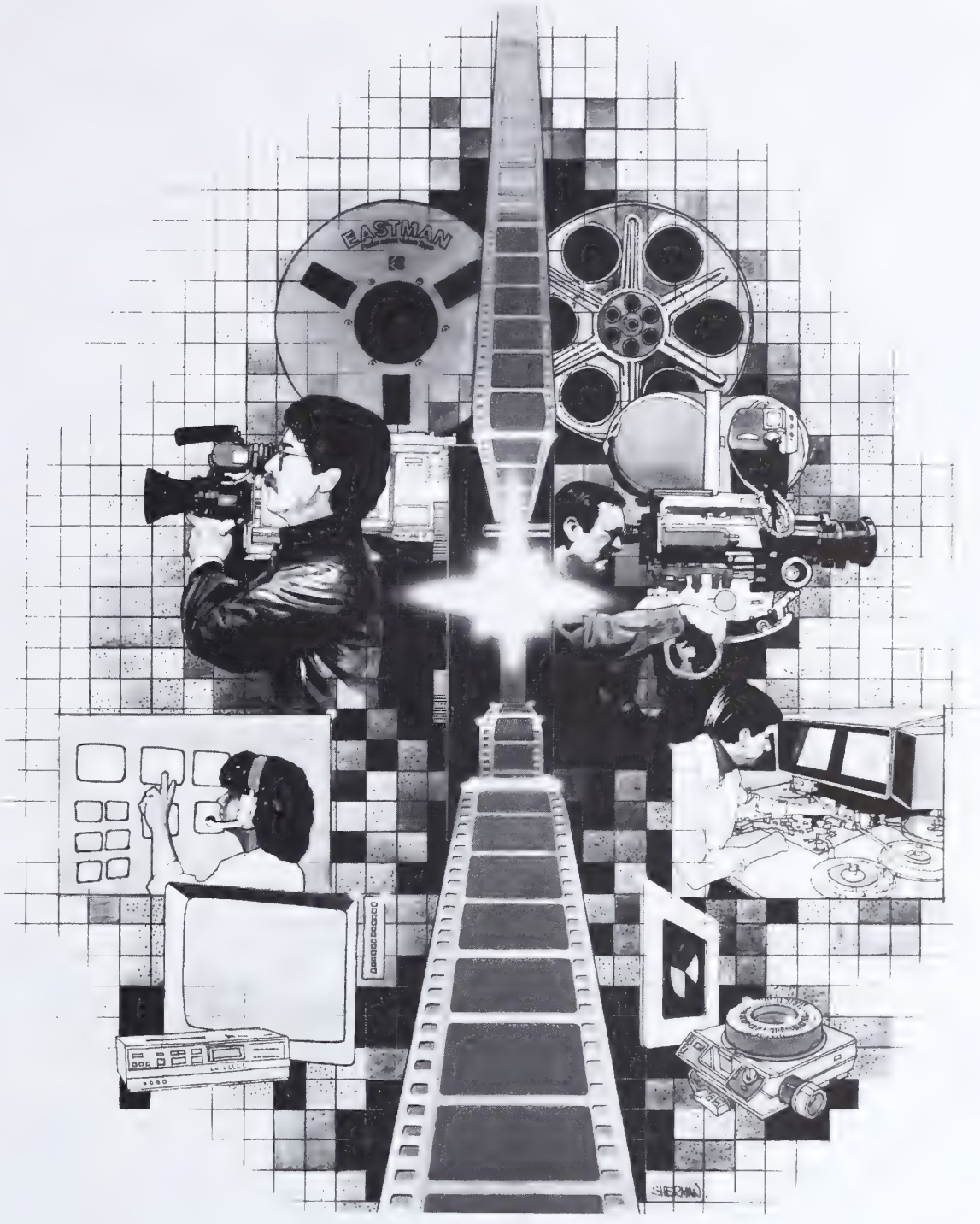
The AIVF/Emergency Legislative Fund was established last fall to subsidize lobbying efforts to establish a National Independent Program Service that will guarantee the funding, promotion, and distribution of independent production for public television.

We wish to thank the following individuals for their contributions: Joyce Bolinger, Frank Brittain, Jem Cohen, Barbara A. and Joseph C. D'Alessandro, Mansour Ali Faridi, Kaja Gam Henriksen, Grania Gurievitch, Nina Koocher, Ross McElwee, Mark Mori, Stevenson Palfi, Daniel Reeves, Marc Weiss, Nancy Yasecko.

AIVF
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

DISCUSSION OF AIVF ACTIVITIES, NOMINATIONS FOR AIVF BOARD OF DIRECTORS, REFRESHMENTS AND CAMARADERIE

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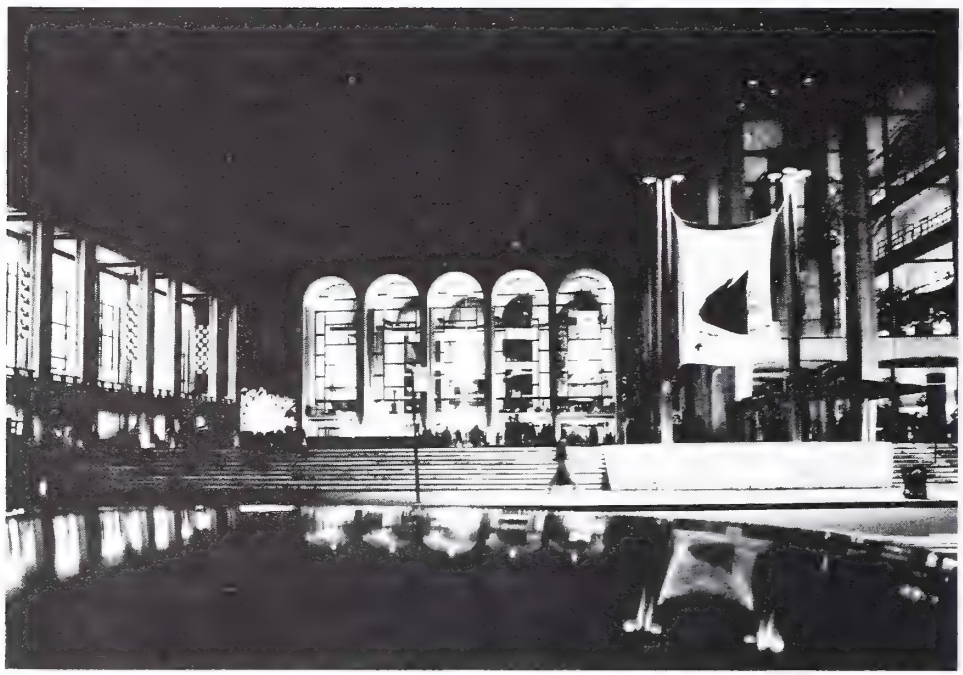
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COVER: Georgian director Irakli Kvirikadze finished his dramatic feature *The Swimmer* (featuring Gudea Buzduli) in 1981, but when it was released in 1984 some scenes about the Stalin era were cut. The film was re-released in 1987 with several of the cuts restored, and this version was screened at the 1988 San Francisco Film Festival. In "Glasnost and Georgian Cinema," Karen Rosenberg surveys contemporary movie-making in the Soviet Republic of Georgia in light of recent liberalizations taking place in Soviet culture. Photo courtesy of the San Francisco Film Festival.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD AT THE NEW YORK FILM FESTIVAL



Almost immediately after the 1987 New York Film Festival screened its final program, the Film Society of Lincoln Center became the focus of controversy over personnel changes on the festival's prestigious selection committee.

Photo: Henry Grossman, courtesy Film Society of Lincoln Center

On February 17 the Film Society of Lincoln Center named David Sterritt, film critic for the *Christian Science Monitor*, and Philip Lopate, writer and programmer at the Houston Museum of Fine Arts, to the five-member selection committee for the New York Film Festival. Sterritt and Lopate will replace film critics Richard Corliss and David Denby, who both resigned two weeks earlier. The two newcomers join Carrie Rickey of the *Philadelphia Enquirer*, Wendy Keys, executive producer/programmer at the Society, and Richard Peña, the Society's new program director.

The announcement of Lopate and Sterritt's appointment to the committee ends over two months of controversy that began when Richard Roud retired as festival director after 25 years with the Society. Roud—whose name is practically synonymous with the festival and its reputation as a showcase for European *auteurs* like Jean-Luc Godard, Louis Malle, and Eric Rohmer—resigned in late October 1987, immediately following a *New York Times* report that the Society's board of directors was planning to ask him to leave. In a subsequent article in the October 23 edition of the *Times*, Roud's departure was attributed to two quarrels he had with Joanne Koch, the Society's executive director. The *Times*' reporter wrote that Koch had attempted to impose her tastes on the selection committee when she circulated a memo asking that they reconsider their decision not to program *The Whales of August* and Fellini's *Intervista* for the 1987 festival. Roud was said to challenge Koch on the basis that her request contravened the committee's traditional autonomy.

Although Roud's administrative and personal differences with Koch have been widely acknowledged, many protested what they saw as clumsiness in the Society's handling of the matter, especially their leaks to the press about the board's discussions prior to reaching a decision about Roud's position. Carrie Rickey, the only member of the committee who did not resign in the aftermath of Roud's departure, admitted that disagreements had occurred between Roud and Koch but refuted the interpretation that independent critics were consistently pitted against the Society's administration in disputes over committee decision-making. "The *Times* delineated false lines [between the groups]," she told the *Independent*. "As far as I can tell, the *Whales of August* controversy existed in the imagination of Denby and others. I never felt that my opinion was being pressured [by the administration]. The memo was made into a bigger issue than it really was." Although Rickey considered resigning last October to protest the Society's treatment of Roud, she now believes that the *Times* precipitated his departure by reporting that he was fired before a decision had been made. "Something would have been hammered out if the story had not broke," she pointed out, "but things became too polarized."

After Roud's departure, the Society asked Corliss, film critic for *Time* magazine and co-editor of the Society's journal *Film Comment*, to chair the selection committee. Corliss agreed on the condition that Roud stay on as a voting member. The board turned down this proposal, even though they had stated earlier that Roud would serve as a consultant to the festival. The board then rejected Corliss' request that Roud act as the festival's European consultant and return to the committee next year. On January 29 both Corliss and Denby announced their resignations.

Unlike Denby, Corliss did not leave to protest the Society administration's perceived violations of the committee's independence. "My resignation had nothing to do with Keys and Peña's being part of the selection committee," he said. "It had to do with the strong belief that the festival's continuity would not be maintained without Richard Roud's participation. When the majority of the board disagreed with me, I felt I was no longer the person the Society needed. I went down with Roud's ship."

Although a clean slate was not the Society's intention when it considered Roud's status, a new direction seems to be what the board had in mind when it reconstituted the committee. "The board had picked a committee that is less mainstream than any in the past," Koch explained. "It wanted

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a committee with as much knowledge about films as possible—one with a perspective that is broad, open, and responsive." Wendy Keys, for example, while serving as the program director for the Society has been on the selection committee for the New Directors/New Films series which the Society co-sponsors with the Museum of Modern Art. She is the fourth woman on the committee since it was first established in 1963, and her appointment marks the first time in the festival's history that two women sit on the committee at the same time.

Richard Peña, the new chair of the selection committee, comes to the Society from the Film Center of the Art Institute of Chicago, where his commitment to U.S. independent cinema and work by third world producers was evident in his programming. "The New York Film Festival will continue as a small festival committed to showing excellent films," he predicted, "but it will expand to include more third world cinema, experimental work, and documentaries." One priority for Peña is changing attitudes commonly held by filmmakers—especially independents—towards the festival. "Over the years there has evolved a certain hesitancy on the part of many filmmakers to submit films. People censor themselves because they do not feel they they fit a certain image of the festival. I want to emphasize that the door is wide open. I hope to achieve some eclecticism in our selections."

New committee members Sterritt and Lopate concur. "I agree with what Philip Lopate told the *New York Times* about making the festival more surprising and less predictable," said Sterritt. "The festival has been known for showing respectable films by respectable filmmakers. I prefer to be stimulating, go for controversy, stir people up with works by people like Bruce Conner, Stan Brakhage, Su Friedrich, Robert Breer. Although I prefer conventional work," he added, "I hope the festival will be somewhat more eccentric, more intuitive, and lot more unpredictable. I want to go further in the direction of third world films and truly avant-garde independent movies."

On the question of the committee's integrity, none of the new members are worried about administrative meddling. "All of us are based outside New York," Sterritt noted, referring to himself, Lopate, and Rickey. "We have our loyalties outside the area and are not in anyone's pocket. The Society has assured me that it has no interest in pressuring anyone, and it emphasizes the critics' independence."

QUYNH THAI

NEW DOC SERIES GETS READY FOR LAUNCH

After two years in the pipeline, a new Public Broadcasting Service series featuring independently produced documentaries is set to premiere this summer. Titled *POV*, an acronym for "point of view," the acquisition series will begin its 10-week run on Tuesday, July 5 with a national satellite feed at 10 p.m.—the time-slot occupied by *Frontline* during the regular season. *POV* will be presented by a consortium of public television stations: WNET, WGBH, KCET, and South Carolina ETV. Previously dubbed *The American Documentary*, the series was recently rechristened in order to avoid confusion with PBS' *American Playhouse, American Masters,* and especially *American Experience*, another upcoming documentary showcase [see "Package Deal: A New Documentary Series," December 1986 and "Making History: PBS' *American Experience*," December 1987]. The name change also resulted from "an informal market survey—our asking people in airports and that kind of thing," explains executive producer Marc Weiss. These conversations indicated that people would stay away from any series with "documentary" in the title. "We can't rehabilitate the word if they won't even tune in," says Weiss. Calling the series *Point of View* also lets stations and viewers know at the outset that the programs won't follow the formulas of television documentaries as developed by network news divisions. Instead, filmmakers will appear at the beginning of each program to introduce their work and provide a context, exlain the motivation for tackling their subject, or give other relevant background information. In cases where time permits, the program will conclude with a follow-up appearance.



Phyllis Metal, aged 70, who throws pottery despite her arthritis, is profiled in *Acting Our Age*. Michal Aviad's film was selected for the first program of the first season of *POV*, the independenent documentary series that will premiere on July 5 on PBS.

Courtesy filmmaker

The original notion of packaging the programs into several thematically linked mini-series was abandoned during the selection process. Julia Reichert, codirector of such documentaries as *Seeing Red* and *Union Maids*, was one of the individuals representing independents on *POV*'s editorial committee, which also included public television representatives from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, PBS, the stations in the presenting consortium, and several smaller stations. According to Reichert, the committee deliberated between framing the series as an "art of the documentary" survey, with foremost examples of various documentary forms (a framework preferred by independents on the committee), versus a selection based solely on "quality" (an approach favored by station representatives) without regard for stylistic diversity. The final selection falls somewhere between the two.

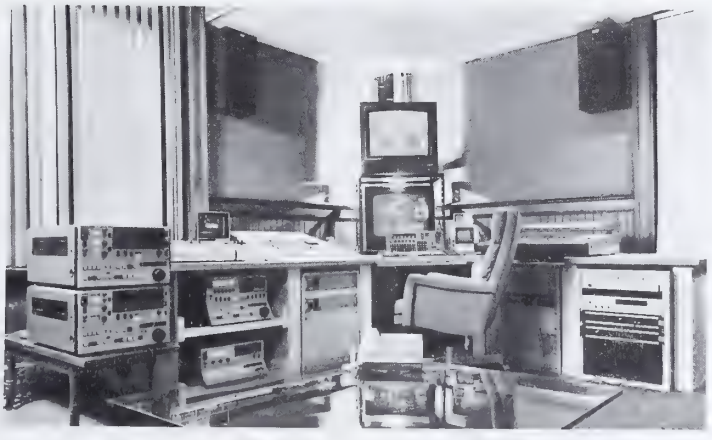
Winnowing down 550 submissions to the final 12 involved a complicated and attenuated process. Complete title lists went back and forth between Weiss and the editorial committee for ranking and comments, evaluative grids were drawn up, and prescreenings occurred. These were followed by more rankings, more grids, and more lists sent to and fro. The committee then met for an intensive three-day review session, during which about 40 works were screened and the list narrowed down to 15, with three alternates. Out of these Weiss selected the final list.

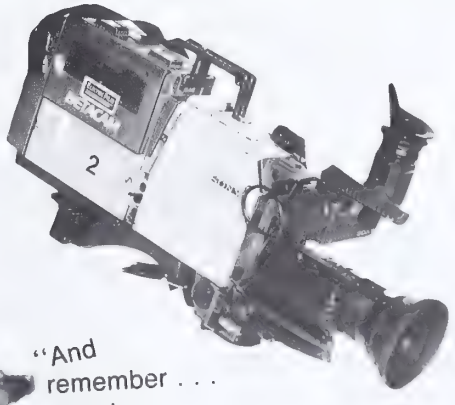
A common fear within the independent community during the formative stages of this series, particularly once it became clear that it would be presented by a station consortium, was that public television stations would have firm control. But no such split of opinion materialized in the committee. "We weren't on opposite sides of the fence, although there were clearly different perspectives at work," says Reichert. "Independents were interested in supporting individuals. We'd say, 'That's so-and-so's new film.' The public television people couldn't care less about that. They were just looking for 'quality.'" Even so, there was more general agreement than many anticipated. Conflicting opinions were often more a matter of regional differences than professional affiliation.

POV will premiere with *Acting Our Age*, by Michal Aviad and, tentatively, *American Tongues*, by Andrew Kolker and Louis Alvarez. This and one other program will run two hours. Two shows are slotted for 90 minutes, while the remainder will last 60 minutes. In addition to the opening program, at least one other will pair two works: *Knocking on Armageddon's Door*, by Torv Carlsen and John Magnus, and *Living with AIDS*, by Tina DiFeliciantonio. The remaining eight programs will feature single works: *The Good Fight: The Abraham Lincoln Brigade in the Spanish Civil War*, by Noel Buckner, Mary Dore,



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POV is paying 300 dollars per minute for acquisitions, all of which will have their national television premieres on *POV*. The contract asks for exclusive broadcast rights for four releases over a period of three years. While there are restrictions on licensing to cable television, Weiss says none exist on the home video, foreign, or theatrical markets.

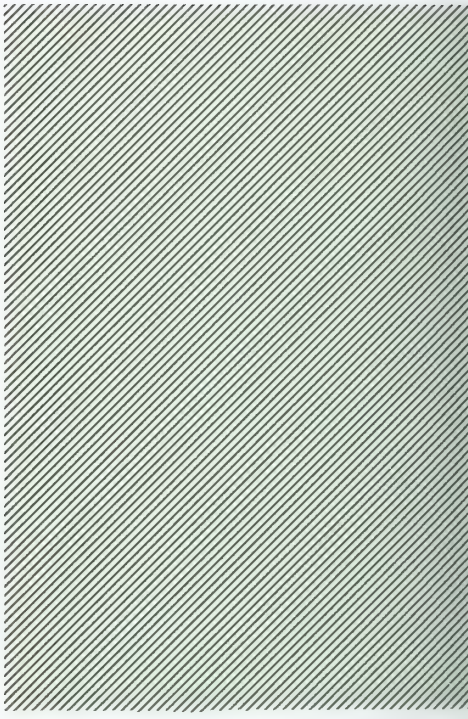
So far, Weiss has raised nearly $600,000 of the series' $750,000 budget. With the help of David Davis, executive producer of *American Playhouse* and now also *POV*'s executive director, he got backing from the powerful stations in the presenting consortium. Their support provided a critical stamp of approval in the eyes of many PBS affiliates and PBS itself. PBS subsequently came through with a a $35,000 Program Development Fund grant and will give the program a national satellite feed. But all this represents just half the task. Now that water has been brought to the horse, it's Weiss' job to convince the horse that it's thirsty.

Right now there is no guarantee or even indication how many stations will pick up the series this summer. In promoting *POV* Weiss is working hard to convince stations to take the entire series, and not just cherry-pick individual programs. He has been getting some advice on promotion from PBS officials Gail Christian, director of news and special events and a *POV* editorial committee member, and Steve Ashley, associate director of program scheduling. The publicity campaign will include letters from the consortium stations' presidents, telephone calls to the top market stations by members of the editorial committee and staff, a pre-feed, and a teleconference. Newly employed by PBS, teleconferences allow stations to watch a promotional reel, then phone in questions to a series representative standing by in a television studio.

Each program in *POV* will have 20, 30, and 60 second promotional spots, in addition to whatever press coverage they are able to generate. Weiss has budgeted $150,000 for promotion and has hired a public relations firm to coordinate 90 percent of the national publicity and help with grassroots outreach. The New York-based firm, Gene Nichols & Associates, has worked for such PBS series as *Frontline* and *Vietnam: A Television History*.

Meanwhile, Weiss' office is concentrating on encouraging media arts centers to get involved. "This is an opportunity for media arts centers to


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establish a relationship with their local public television stations," says Weiss. In the offing are sneak previews and guest appearances by filmmakers. In turn, Weiss hopes that media arts centers will be able to help generate local press coverage, by providing critical links to editors and critics. "We are working with limited resources," he says, "So the more help, the better."

PATRICIA THOMSON

NEW YORK BLACK/ LATINO MEDIA GROUP ESTABLISHED

With a hand from the Black and Puerto Rican Legislative Caucus of the New York State legislature, black and Latino independents in New York have finally been able to exercise some clout in Albany. Last August, a group primarily composed of black media artists, including Ayoka Chenzira, Carl Clay, Ronald Grey, Steven James, Bill Miles, and Al Santana, formed the new organization Black and Hispanic Images with a major grant of $500,000 from the New York State Department of Economic Development. The purpose of BHI is to foster the presence of black and Hispanic media in the state through direct support to film- and videomakers.

According to executive director Geri Jasper, BHI's main focus is fostering feature filmmaking—through low-cost equipment rental, consulting services from a network of professionals in the field, and raising venture capital for individual projects. BHI members are able to submit projects for possible inclusion in their portfolio of development projects, which are shopped around to corporate sponsors for financing. A review panel makes recommendations to the staff from the pool of applicants and selected projects receive varying degrees of service. Jasper estimates that the staff of four (soon to be expanded to six) can accommodate approximately five projects per year for comprehensive, full-service attention. The current docket includes Melvin McCray's 13-part video series on African leaders, which is seeking final postproduction and distribution funding, and a dramatic feature by Osiros Gordon McClennand called *Dark Designs*.

The one-year state grant made it possible for BHI to purchase production equipment in 16mm, super 16mm, and Betacam formats, as well as three-quarter-inch video postproduction. Independents can edit at the Long Island City facility for as little as 17 dollars per hour, using an A/B roll set-up with decision list management capability.

BHI services are not offered exclusively to black and Latino artists, but any participating projects must have a high level of black and Latino involvement in all aspects of production. Recently, the board of directors of the organization was expanded from the founding group to include three Latino members, independent film and videomaker Carlos de Jesus, Mildred Alicea Gonzales of RGI Communications, and assistant general counsel to Children's Television Workshop Iris Morales. Contact Black and Hispanic Images, 11-45 47th Ave., Ste. 201, Long Island City, NY 11101; (718) 729-3232.

RENEE TAJIMA

DUPONT-COLUMBIA HONORS *EYES ON THE PRIZE*

Broadcast journalists bestowed one of their highest honors on Blackside, Inc. for the six-part television series *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years, 1954-1965*. At the forty-sixth annual Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards in Broadcast Journalism, the Gold Baton Award was presented to executive producer Henry Hampton, producers Callie Crossley, James A. DeVinney, Orlando Bagwell, and associate producer Prudence Arndt. The Gold Baton is given to the program that has made "the greatest contribution to the public's understanding of an important issue or news event." This is the first time an independent production company has received the award. In addition, Blackside, Inc. was also awarded the $10,000 Trustees Prize, which goes every year to an independent producer.

Under the category of Independent Productions, Ken Burns' Florentine Films was awarded a Silver Baton Award for *Huey Long*, a presentation of WETA in Washington, D.C., and Louisiana Public Broadcasting.

PT

SEQUELS

The **Rockefeller Foundation's Arts and Humanities** division has reinstituted its media fellowship program, suspended since 1983 ["Rockefeller Reconsiders Media Policy," December 1986]. Seven producers were recently awarded $35,000 each under the new Intercultural Film and Video Fellowships program. The intercultural emphasis of these revived fellowships brings this component of the media program into conformance with the Rockefeller Foundation's general funding philosophy, which emphasizes international and intercultural projects. The 1988 fellowship winners, selected from a pool of 83 nominees, will work on the projects they had submitted to the review panel of artists, exhibitors, and scholars. They are: Charles Burnett, *To Sleep with Anger*, Haile Gerima, *Nunu*, DeeDee Halleck, *De Peliculas: Archives of Latin American Conflict 1890-1940*, Paul Kos, *Tower of Babel*, Victor Masayesva Jr., *The Hopi Ritual Clown*, Lourdes Portillo, *Emilia*, and Trinh T. Minh-ha, *Surname Viet Given Name Nam*.

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PHOTO BY WILLIAM DUKE

SUPER VHS: SUPER GREAT OR SUPER HYPE?



Jill Godmilow (with camera), shooting a rehearsal of Mabou Mines' adaptation of *King Lear*, with a prototype of the JVC GF-S1000HU full-size Super-VHS camera. Ruth Maleczech (seated at left) plays Lear, while Lee Breur, Lola Pashalinski, Karen Evans Kandel, and Isabel Monk also perform gender-reversed roles.
Photo: Paul Ryan

Barton Weiss

I remember how I felt when I first heard about something called Super VHS. My friend, the computer junkie at the local computer store, told me JVC was working on this new format that was VHS but somehow looked better than three-quarter-inch and almost as good as one-inch. Not only that, but it would fix all the half-inch blues of crosstalk between the luminance—brightness information—and the chroma—color information. (Crosstalk is most often seen as muddiness in colors that shows up in multiple generations.) According to my source, S-VHS, as it's now known, would be both an industrial and a consumer format—meaning that all the research and development that goes into each end would give us a better product. That is, the cheap camcorder would gain by professional designs and controls, while the professional gear would reap the rewards of mass market doodads and enhancements. It also means that a consumer format could be a mastering format. I was so happy I thought I died and went to video heaven.

That was over a year and a half ago, and I've been telling everybody (who is still listening to me) that S-VHS would change everything. It was going to put broadcast image quality in the hands of masses and make them all video artists, or at least allow them the opportunity. It would make "desktop video" a reality (the ability to create video projects, with some computer graphics if you liked, in house—not a commercial house, but quite literally *your* house). You would be able to shoot with a consumer-priced small and compact camcorder, making more intimate documentary production possible. Then you would be able to do all your postproduction on a small editing system, and everything would look great.

Well, the equipment is finally out, and it *is* impressive. It has well over 400 lines of resolution. Lines of resolution on video are not the number of scanning lines (that's 525 in the U.S.) but the number of lines you can read sharply when looking at a monitor showing a recorded resolution chart. Or, in other words, it's how much detail the system can reproduce sharply or at what point a series of lines turn to mush. By comparison, normal VHS resolution is 220 lines; three-quarter-inch is 240; the NTSC broadcast signal your TV picks up is 330. If and when Sony comes out with their "super" system that they call Beta ED (extended definition), it will have 500 lines of resolution. (The Sony system has a credibility advantage over VHS because Beta is considered more professional, more like three-quarter or Betacam than VHS.) So, S-VHS gives you more resolution than your TV can see. In order to see a significant difference, you need a new TV/monitor. You need the monitor for a reason other than resolution, and that's for the Y/C— or S-VHS—cable. To fix the VHS problem of crosstalk between the luminance and chroma signals, the two must be kept separate throughout the chain of events, so JVC came up with the Y/C cable (Y stands for luminance, C for chroma), with a 4 pin DIN-type connector.

How does S-VHS do it? The main technological breakthrough that put the Super in VHS is the blank tape, which was invented by 3M (Scotch). They squished more information-reproducing oxide on the tape surface and devised a process for distributing the oxide coating more evenly, which allows a greater bandwidth for image-producing frequencies. JVC—let's give them some credit for inventing the format—shifted the placement and range of regular VHS frequencies, which helps achieve a better image but also brings up the incompatibility issue.

An S-VHS tape recorded with an S-VHS signal will only play back on an S-VHS deck. An S-VHS deck will play both regular VHS and S-VHS tapes. But regular tapes won't look any better than they do on a regular VHS deck. On the other hand, a recording made with an S-VHS camcorder on a non-S-VHS tape will look better than that made

with a regular camcorder, because the S-VHS camcorders have more pixels (picture elements) in the image forming chip. Also, you can record with a normal VHS camera using S-VHS tape, but it will look no better and cost twice as much. One last note on S-VHS's improvements over the regular format: it looks almost as good in the slower ep and slp consumer modes as in sp. This is important if you want to shoot with a consumer S-VHS type C camera that will allow you to shoot for up to an hour rather than the 20 minutes possible with a normal VHS type C cassette. However, when you go to the slow mode the sound quality goes out the window.

All this is great, but the second video revolution I had hoped for hasn't materialized yet. It may be on the way, but everyone seems to be waiting to see if it catches on and nobody—from rental houses to home video companies to consumers and, to an extent, the equipment manufacturers—seems to want to stick out either their necks or their wallets. With Betacam (and Betacam sp), MI, and MII, three-quarter-inch and three-quarter-inch sp systems in hand, nobody wants to buy another system, especially if it won't be around for long. For instance, Victor Duncan, probably the major rental chain outside the two Coasts, isn't interested in investing in much S-VHS gear, partly because they are concerned with being perceived as catering to the consumer market, afraid of getting phone calls asking if they have *Top Gun* for rent. And all postproduction personnel I have spoken with are nervous about investing in another format, especially one tainted by associations with home video. However, everyone said that if their customers wanted it they would go ahead. Home video companies and local rental stores are worried because S-VHS is only backwards compatible. They don't want to produce or stock two formats again, especially when they just got rid of that Beta stuff. Everyone repeats the same line, "As soon as there is demand we will get into it," but, for now, only the bold with bucks will buy S-VHS and currently there is no demand. No chicken, no egg.

□ □ □

As independents there are several ways we can deal with S-VHS, each with cost and aesthetic implications. The cheapest and simplest would be to buy or rent a S-VHS consumer camcorder and edit with straight cuts on an S-VHS editing system. This is fine if you don't need dissolves or effects. With a system like this you might be able to add some home-style Amiga computer graphics to spice up the tape. Of course, you will end up with an S-VHS master. Which should make good VHS copies.

The next step up, costwise, is to shoot with S-VHS and transfer it to either Betacam or one-inch, burn in time code, and proceed in post, through normal channels. Jill Godmilow recently shot *The Lear Tapes*, an experimental videotape based on Mabou Mines' gender-reversed adaptation of *King Lear*, using three cameras simultaneously: a prototype of a full-size S-VHS consumer camera—the JVC GF-S1000HU, a three-chip Betacam, and a regular VHS camcorder. About the quality she said, "I actually prefer the look of the S-VHS to the Betacam. The Beta produced well-saturated, even images that resemble network news, while the S-VHS put out punchier, grittier, less saturated images, with a fine grain texture comparable to well-exposed black and white film—and with just as much apparent resolution as the Betacam. Once the S-VHS is time-base corrected and bumped up to one-inch, there's no question it's broadcastable."

Currently, several manufacturers have S-VHS type C camcorders on the market: Panasonic, JVC, Quasar, Zenith, RCA, Minolta, and Magnavox. In the full-size camcorder department, the only one out as I write this is the chock full of bells and whistles Panasonic PV S350 with some snazzy digital effects. But there will soon be a JVC model and a host of others, including a Canon. This entry is significant because one of the usual limitations of consumer-grade camcorders is the Coke bottle glass lens, and Canon often puts a better lens on their cameras.

In her discussions with JVC about the camcorder, Godmilow reports that they described it as the "maniac camera"—something for ultra-sophisticated camera nuts. They didn't realize that independents would seize the moment and use it as a serious piece of equipment. Because of this, Godmilow notes three problems with its design. First, there is no aperture ring as such. The JVC camera does offer more control than the Panasonic (which has only a backlight control), since there is a button for manual override of the automatic exposure system. This has 14 positions allowing for "more" or "less" light, but it doesn't give the control of real f-stops. Second, there is no through-the-lens white balance system. Instead, the camera offers four settings: daylight, tungsten, fluorescent, and auto. If your light source is either all daylight or all tungsten, these work fine, but when working in mixed light the camera goes crazy. Under those circumstances, the only solution is to control the light. The third problem is serious only if you are posting in S-VHS. In S-VHS and all half-inch systems, the great hi-fi sound can't be edited in the insert mode, because the hi-fi tracks are recorded under the video signal and can't be separated from the picture. The only way to separate them is to dub all elements to a second generation submaster. If you're mastering in VHS, the sound must be transferred to the inferior longitudinal track, so there is an inevitable deterioration of audio quality. Another problem is that there are too many junky effects buttons, so that the date and time occasionally pop up while you hunt for the zoom motor.

On the plus side, consumer camcorders are so light, small, unobtrusive, and simple to operate that you can shoot in situations that are otherwise

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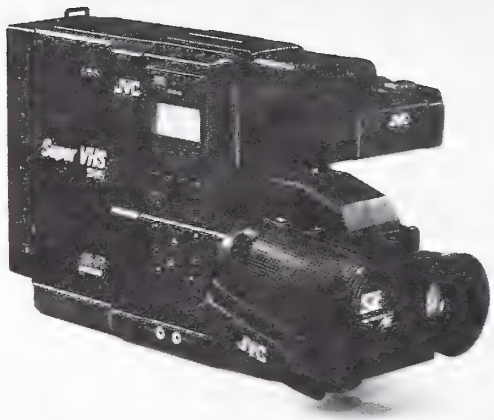
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The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers



JVC's GF-S1000HU full-size Super-VHS camera—not yet on the market—takes advantage of JVC's new system for separating luminance and chroma in the video signal, thereby preventing muddied images that result from crosstalk.

Courtesy JVC Company of America

impossible. You can also improvise, dance around, and be more intuitive. Shooting with one of these brought back the excitement, life, and passion I had when I first shot film. Godmilow reports a similar experience: "We took it everywhere—to lunch, to dinner—and shot in all types of situations without intimidating anyone. Because it's such an economical and pleasurable system, I found myself playing and experimenting and taking the kind of crazy chances that sometimes pay off big. I should add that I shot five times more that I would have with a heavier system, and I will pay for that in the editing room."

One difficulty in working with consumer products in a professional way is that this often means working backwards—akin to working with a super 8 camera. Those who choose this route are treated that way by the professional community and, unfortunately, by the independent community as well. The machines look similar (and they both have "super" prefixes), but the major difference is that Kodak never made a negative film stock and thus limited the distribution and exhibition of super 8 film (without bumping up), whereas S-VHS is made to be copied.

Additionally, S-VHS signals the intensifying battle between consumer and professional camps within the manufacturers' own confines. Sony has coined the term "prosumer" and is taking to heart the market that falls between its consumer and professional division (which consists of its newly merged broadcast and industrial divisions). Who knows if their Beta ED system—even better than S-VHS and currently available in Japan—will ever be released here. At both JVC and Panasonic bitter wars are being waged between the industrial and consumer divisions, and at Panasonic these even constitute separate companies. Such bickering may forestall advancements in either or both camps.

The benefits of the crossover world are the accessories that come with consumer gear. You can get a fluid head tripod with a quick release plate for less than $100. There are cheap wireless mics and other knick-knacks, which are great until they fail to hold up with extensive use. But remember, you're shooting a tape with a tiny budget that will look like it cost ten times the price and, in many cases, might not have been made otherwise.

Using a cheap camera can be troublesome, however, which brings us to the third possible configuration for independent production: shooting with the industrial grade S-VHS systems and editing cuts only on an S-VHS editing system. Panasonic has a very fine portable S-VHS deck (AG-7400) that has a time code input and just about anything else you want in a portable deck. JVC has done them one better by locking the deck to their S-VHS camera. Panasonic has an S-VHS editing system (AG-7500, with the AG-A750 edit controller) that's plus-or-minus two frames accurate.

The fourth approach, the class act, is to shoot with industrial grade and bump up to one-inch for post. The only drawback in this scenario is that you won't save much money, the usual motivation for working in half-inch in the first place. The rental cost for a Betacam isn't that much more, and certainly three-quarter-inch rental is almost comparable. The only major difference is in the price of blank tapes, which only becomes significant in the long run. And the Betacam and three-quarter systems will produce better images, primarily because those cameras have better lenses. John Godfrey, who was the engineer responsible for bumping up some of the reel-to-reel half-inch tapes from the first generation of independent videomaking for broadcast, stresses the use of a good camera—he doesn't mean a $2,000 consumer item—as the most important ingredient in obtaining a workable image.

On the subject of bump ups, there is a potential practical problem looming: a postproduction house has to have more than a S-VHS deck to do the job. Because S-VHS employs shifted frequencies for chroma and luminance, a time base corrector may or may not work. Several companies

The GR-S55U is JVC's type C camcorder, designed for the home video market but with some appealing features for independent producers—like its pricetag and portability, as well as the image quality when bumped up to three-quarter or one-inch in postproduction.

Courtesy JVC Company of America



are manufacturing special TBCs for S-VHS, and engineers are currently turning a few screws to get a good image through the older ones. Before making a transfer, you should make some tests. Godmilow has worked with NVI in New York City, and other shops around the country are beginning to get involved in the new format, but slowly. However, a new level of postproduction is opening up that's intended for the low-end industrial and the high-end wedding/bar mitzvah/dance class folks. This is where S-VHS is getting its workout.

Still, the big question is: Will S-VHS replace three-quarter, Betacam, or anything else? Most observers believe the three-quarter-inch market is dead. The low-end producers will happily gravitate to S-VHS; people with a bit more money will go, or have already gone, to Betacam. There's no question that S-VHS can't and won't replace or professionally compete with Betacam or one-inch, as some zealots claim. As several friends have pointed out, the cheaper and better equipment becomes, the schlockier most work looks—people get lazy. At the same time, with cheaper equipment available, some wonderful, energetic work gets produced that would otherwise only be proposals trying for funding. One other note of extreme caution before you invest in S-VHS: very soon (maybe in five years) video will be totally digital, and then everything, every format, will change. But that's life with video.

Barton Weiss is a film/videomaker, programmer, and the director of the Dallas Video Festival; he teaches at the University of Texas at Dallas.

Panasonic's AG-7400 portable S-VHS VCR offers time code input, along with other professional features.

Courtesy Panasonic Industrial Company



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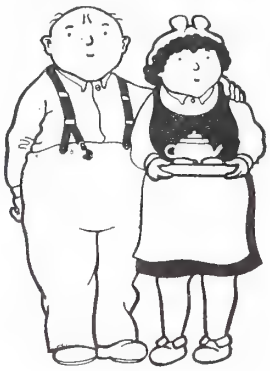
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ARE YOU ENTITLED? TITLE PROTECTION AND TITLE REPORTS

Robert C. Harris

[Editor's note: This article is presented only for the purpose of educating independent film- and videomakers and is not to be taken as legal advice.]

While to the average person a title report is a report on land ownership and encumbrances usually obtained by a purchaser in a real estate transaction, the term takes on a special and different meaning in the entertainment industry. In this context a title report assists a producer or publisher in determining whether a title is free for use on an entertainment property.

Titles of works in the entertainment field, including motion pictures, television programs, books, plays, magazines, songs, and records, can become valuable assets of the owner of the property. The recognition value of such enormously popular entertainment properties as *E.T.*, *Jaws*, and *Gone with the Wind* is evident. Indeed, it is not unheard of for a film producer to purchase rights in a property solely or primarily to acquire the exclusive rights to use its title, which is believed to have strong attention getting or associational value. As will be discussed below, the law may afford protection against a third party's use of the same or closely similar title. Accordingly, care must be exercised by a film producer in selecting a title, and a title report can be highly useful if not necessary.

While one might assume that a title, particularly a fanciful or creative one, will be protected under copyright law, which protects literary and artistic expression, the courts have consistently denied such protection to titles. Nor have titles of individual entertainment works been granted federal trademark registration (afforded to names or words that identify the goods or services of a particular party), on the grounds that a title, no matter how fanciful or unusual, is merely descriptive of the contents of the work. However, the title of a *series* of works, such as a game show, television series, newspaper, or magazine, may be registered in the U.S. Trademark Office, on the premise that the title indicates that each show in the series, and each issue of the magazine or newspaper, comes from the same source. Further, if a title is used on articles of merchandising, such as clothing, posters, mugs, etc., trademark registration is available covering such ancillary uses.

Titles of *individual* works have found a home, however, in the area of the law known as unfair competition. The common law of the various states, as well as Section 43(a) of the federal Lanham Act, proscribe false representations concerning one's product or service. The principles of unfair competition seek to protect the goodwill and reputation that have been earned by the first comer, to prevent the second comer from unfairly trading on that goodwill, and to protect the public from deception. The unfair competition laws are enforced by remedies of both injunctive relief and damages.

As a general rule, in order to prevent a second party from using a title which the first party believes to infringe his/her rights, the first party must establish actual public use of the title, "secondary meaning," and a likelihood of confusion between the two titles. It is not enough that a person may have been the first to have thought up a title or have communicated it to friends and associates or prospective producers. In order to acquire any enforceable rights, it is necessary to use the title in connection with the property that is or will imminently be available to the public (in the latter case in pre-release publicity).

However, under prevailing doctrine, mere public use in and of itself is insufficient to enforce rights in a title. Such use must be such that the title has acquired the status of what is known in the law as "secondary meaning," which in essence means that the relevant public has come to associate the title with this particular work. It is not necessary for the public to know the name of the actual source (i.e., the producer or distributor) of the work, as long as the title is associated with a particular work from a particular source.

Whether secondary meaning in a title has been acquired is a question of fact and varies from case to case. The following factors, among others, would be relevant in considering whether secondary meaning has been attained: (a) length of time the title has been in public use; (b) amount of advertising and promotion expenditures and the range of advertising media in which the work has been promoted; (c) gross revenues; (d) box office receipts, units sold, or other indicators of the size of audience which has viewed or purchased the work; (e) critical acclaim, including awards; (f) the number of markets in which the work has been exploited (e.g., theatrical, television, home video, etc.); (g) spin-off and ancillary uses such as sequels, prequels, television series, product merchandising, etc. (for example *Star Trek* television series, *Star Trek* motion pictures I through IV, new *Star Trek* television series, *Star Trek* merchandise); (h) number of third party uses of the same or substantially similar titles.

The higher the numbers in (a) through (g) above and the lower the number in (h) above, the greater the likelihood of a finding of secondary meaning. Of course, not all factors will be present in each case, and the weight that may be accorded each factor will vary. Properly conducted surveys may also be probative on this issue. The true test is whether the facts indicate that the title has acquired a reputation that is both substantial and identified almost exclusively with one property.

An important consideration influencing this determination is how original or creative the title is. It is much more difficult to establish secondary meaning in a descriptive as opposed to a catchy title. As common sense might dictate, it may be virtually impossible to establish secondary meaning for a film concerning the U.S. Civil War entitled *The Civil War* or a film about the Vietnam War entitled *The Vietnam War* as opposed to *Gone with the Wind* and *Apocalypse Now*.

By similar reasoning, one may not appropriate exclusively as the title of a biographical film the name of the portrayed figure. Further, when a work has entered the public domain for copyright purposes, and anybody may exploit the work, such work may be used under its original title. Thus, a film production of the play *Hamlet* may be so titled. Indeed, it was held that Walt Disney was not entitled to enjoin a competitor from releasing a motion picture entitled *Alice in Wonderland* subsequent to its release of a film of the same title on the grounds that anyone was free to do a movie of the Lewis Carroll story under its original title.

However, to say that it is very difficult to protect highly descriptive titles is not to say that it is necessarily impossible. While these titles may be geographically descriptive, one would be hard pressed to argue that the Rodgers and Hammerstein classics *Oklahoma* and *South Pacific* had not acquired strong secondary meaning. Further, an embellishment of an otherwise available name can be protected, as in the case of *Jesus Christ Superstar*. This also applies to portion of titles, and thus the descriptive portion of a title may well not be protected against third party use. The descriptiveness of the word "star" in connection with science fiction set in outer space accounts for why the highly successful *Star Trek* and *Star Wars* properties can co-exist.

Of particular significance to the independent filmmaker, not only titles of blockbuster theatri-

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cal motion pictures with multi-million dollar box offices, but more modest productions can also acquire secondary meaning. Thus, an eight minute black and white film entitled *Anything You Want to Be* on the subject of sexual stereotyping, which had been widely distributed and promoted and critically well-received, was found to have acquired secondary meaning, and its producer was able to enjoin distribution of a seven minute film on the same subject entitled *Anything They Want to Be* and was also entitled to an award of damages.

While essential, establishing secondary meaning is not in and of itself sufficient. The complaining party must also prove that the other party's title is likely to confuse the relevant public as to the source of the second party's product, or that the relevant public would believe that the original party was somehow associated or connected with the second party or its work. It should be noted that proof of actual confusion is not required; the test is likelihood of confusion. Of course, instances of actual confusion are highly persuasive in proving likelihood of confusion. As with secondary meaning, the issue of likelihood of confusion is a question of fact which would vary from case to case. Factors that are considered are: (a) the relative degree of secondary meaning that the first title has achieved (also referred to as the strength of the title); (b) the degree of similarity between the respective titles; (c) similarity of subject matter of the works; (d) respective target markets; (e) respective target audiences; and (f) number of third party uses. Surveys may be helpful in either proving or disproving likelihood of confusion.

It is not necessary for the titles to be identical for there to be likelihood of confusion. Minor variations in the title may be insufficient to dispel the likelihood of confusion. If the dominant or most salient feature of a title has been appropriated, a likelihood of confusion can be found even though other changes have been made in the title. However, if such a dominant portion of the mark is in wide use in other titles, the likelihood of confusion between these two particular titles would be reduced.

The interplay between a dominant portion of a title and third party usage was present in a case involving a novel loosely based on an actual murder entitled *Looking for Mr. Goodbar*, the name Goodbar being fictional. The novel enjoyed wide critical acclaim and popular success and was later made into a theatrical motion picture of the same title. The novelist sought to enjoin the defendants from using the word "Goodbar" as part of the title of a major television movie concerning the actual murder and entitled *Trackdown: Finding the Goodbar Killer*. At an earlier stage in the case the parties had agreed that the defendants would include in the opening and closing credits of their movie a disclaimer to the effect that the movie was not related to the plaintiff's novel. The plaintiff then claimed that the defendants did not properly comply with this agreement and sought a permanent injunction against use of "Goodbar" in their title.

While that court acknowledged that the title of the plaintiff's book may have initially acquired secondary meaning, it found that such secondary meaning had been whittled away by subsequent use of the term "Goodbar" in other works. A number of published articles and a third party novel used the word "Goodbar" as part of their titles in referring to the actual murder, and newspaper articles reinforced this association by referring to the actual murder as the "Goodbar murder" and to the killer as the "Goodbar killer." The court further found evidence that the word itself had become used in the vernacular to identify the singles scene, a dangerous pick-up, or "Mr. Right." Such extensive third party use prompted the court to conclude that the plaintiff could no longer demonstrate secondary meaning in her title. The court also concluded that the plaintiff presented no evidence that the public was misled into believing that she had sponsored or was in any way involved in the production of the defendants' movie and that any possibility of confusion would be alleviated by the disclaimer contained in the prior agreement of the parties. The case illustrates that one word or portion of a title can acquire secondary meaning and may be enjoined from use in another title which is otherwise different, but that unchallenged third party use of such otherwise protectible word can seriously erode the identity between the word and its initiator and hence diminish the likelihood of confusion.

While the respective media in which the titles are used is a factor to be considered in determining likelihood of confusion, a finding of likelihood of confusion is not limited to film title versus film title or even book title versus film title, but can cross other media as well. For example, the publisher of the satirical humor magazine *National Lampoon* was able to enjoin a national television network from using the title *Lampoon* or *ABC Lampoon* for a television series. The opposite can also occur. The producer of the reputed science television series *Nova* was able to enjoin use of *Nova* as the title of a science fiction, fantasy, and occult magazine.

Other source identifying elements which have acquired secondary meaning, in addition to titles, can be enjoined from use by a third party as a title. The owner of rights in the Tarzan books and characters was able to enjoin use of such character names in the title *Tarz & Jane & Boy & Cheeta* for an X-rated film. The publisher of the *Superman* comic strip, whose popular superhero's alter ego, Clark Kent, is employed by the fictitious Metropolis newspaper called the *Daily Planet*, thwarted use of *Daily Planet* as the title of an "alternate culture" news publication. Appropriation of a successful merchandising property will also court danger, and a film producer using the title *Barbie* for a film featuring a hip teenage girl is inviting a lawsuit.

The legal protection that may be available for

titles explains the need for title reports. Title reports can be obtained from various searching entities, who generally charge from $200 to $350 for their reports. Title reports allow the producer and his/her attorney to survey the field, so to speak, and see what's out there. A title report will list titles and other names that are the same or similar, in whole or in part, to the title being searched, and will generally include titles of works registered in the U.S. Copyright Office, titles included in the Library of Congress's indexes, registration in the U.S. Trademark Office, and information appearing in the trade press, such as *Variety*, the *Hollywood Reporter*, *Publisher's Weekly*, and the *New York Times*. A report may also include information as to whether particular titles are still in distribution and in what media. While a title report will not contain information concerning all of the secondary meaning and likelihood of confusion factors discussed above, it should nonetheless assist the producer and counsel in making at least a rough assessment as to the advisability of adopting a particular title. In addition, to the extent that the report does not appear conclusive, it may furnish leads that may be followed up on by the producer to refine a preliminary conclusion and help determine whether or not adoption of a title is a reasonable business risk.

A title report may also be necessary in order to obtain errors and omissions insurance coverage on the property. An E & O policy is obtained by a producer or publisher to indemnify against such claims as invasion of privacy, copyright infringement, defamation, title plagiarism, and other types of unfair competition. In most cases, an E & O application will ask if a title report has been obtained. In some cases, the insurer may request an opinion of counsel that based on review of the report the title appears free for use.

While it may not directly affect many independent film producers, they should be aware that another mechanism exists for screening proposed titles. The Title Registration Bureau administered by the Motion Picture Association of America provides a title registration service, but limited to titles of motion pictures intended for theatrical release in the United States. The service, available to both MPAA members and subscribing nonmembers, allows for registration of titles and accords such titles priority over subsequent requests to register the same or substantially similar titles, thus minimizing the possibility of two motion pictures bearing confusingly similar titles and hopefully reducing recourse to legal process to settle competing claims. The Bureau checks a title application against its registered titles and if it is clear, publishes it for review by members and subscribers, who have the opportunity to protest. In the event a protest cannot be resolved between the parties, there is provision for MPAA arbitration of the dispute. This system is purely voluntary, and the writer is aware of no lawsuit in which a party has sought to enforce the determination of the Bureau.

It is recommended that the film producer obtain a title report sooner rather than later. This enables the producer to attempt to clear a substitute title in the event the first title appears to be unavailable. In addition, if the report is inconclusive and further investigation is warranted, there will be sufficient time to do so. Certainly, the film producer does not want to be in a position where he/she has already invested time and money in promoting a title only to have to change it. Further, the longer the period that a producer has gone with a title the harder it is emotionally to relinquish the title and adopt a new one. It is advisable that the producer come up with variations of a desired title or alternative titles to hold in reserve in case the report is negative. In some cases, if finances permit, it may be useful to search more than one title at the same time.

In considering a title, the preferable choice, both from a defensive and offensive standpoint, is a highly creative or fanciful one. It is unlikely that such a title will infringe anyone else's rights, and it will be easier to police such a title against a second comer. Less desirable is selection of a highly descriptive title. Although from a defensive point of view, it would be difficult for a prior user to prove the requisite secondary meaning and likelihood of confusion to be able to enjoin such title, it would likewise be equally difficult to prevent subsequent use of the same or similar descriptive title by others.

The economic importance of titles, the legal protection that may be afforded them, and the sanctions that may be incurred in infringing them, should prompt the filmmaker to conclude that the answer for him/her to Juliet's question "What's in a name?" could well be "The Name of the Game."

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FIVF TAPE LIBRARY

The FIVF Festival Bureau has established a tape library of members' current works to expedite screenings for upcoming film and video festivals. Members interested in depositing their work in the library should contact: Kathryn Bowser, Festival Bureau director, FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012, (212) 473-3400. ½" and ¾" tapes will be accepted.

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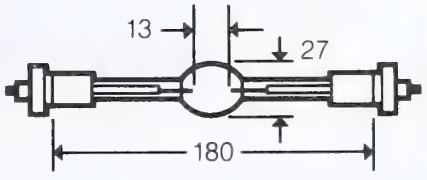
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RISKY BUSINESS
Das Kleine Fernsehspiel and West German TV



From its headquarters in Mainz, Rheinland-Pfalz, ZDF broadcasts across West Germany.
Courtesy ZDF

Reinhard W. Wolf

• WEST GERMAN TELEVISION •

Until recently, television in West Germany was purely a public system. After World War II official West German radio and television broadcast policy established a TV system independent of government or private influence to replace the radio system that had been governed by the Nazi-regime. Therefore, West German TV was legally established as a nonprofit, incorporated public institution. The first nationwide television corporation was ARD (Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Rundfunkanstalten Deutschlands)—a merger of nine federal corporations, which retain their sovereignty within the federation. Traditionally, their common nationwide channel is called the First Program. In 1963 a Second Program was added when ZDF (Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen) started broadcasting. Unlike ARD, ZDF is a centralized, nationwide corporation based in Mainz, Rheinland-Pfalz. Mainz was chosen as the administrative seat for ZDF because it is the capital of the only federal state which had no radio and TV corporation at the time. Since all cultural matters in West Germany, including public broadcasting, lie within the jurisdiction of the federal states, ZDF—not a federation like the ARD members—is governed by an inter-state agreement. After the inauguration of ZDF, the so-called Third Programs were initiated—regional channels programmed by the ARD member corporations originally directed towards education and culture. Until recently those three channels, broadcasting roughly from 4 p.m. to 1 a.m. on a weekday, were the only ones a West German viewer could receive (not counting spill-overs of Third Program broadcasts in border regions).

The institutional structures of these public television corporations are similar: a television board develops program guidelines and monitors their implementation, approves a budget, and elects a director general. An administrative board supervises the financial management of the corporation, and the director general supervises management and is responsible for the structure and contents of actual programs. The West German public television statute guarantees the autonomy of ARD and ZDF and is supposed to insulate them from commercial and government interference. However, each television board consists of representatives of what are regarded as the "relevant groups of society," which necessarily include governments as well as political parties. The political parties have succeeded in exerting the greatest influence on these boards, and they dominate policy by polarizing the other representatives along political lines. Moreover, these corporations are usually headed by insiders from the political party in power in each federal state. The inter-state corporation ZDF, however, tends to represent the interests of the party in power in the national government. Those appointed to high positions within the corporations also tend to reflect the distribution of power among the major political parties that results from parliamentary elections. Therefore, television programs on public TV are closely observed by political parties and cater to their



Robert Braunkamp's *Gelbe Sorte* was a 1987 Kleine Fernsehspiel production.

Courtesy filmmaker

interests. These conditions especially affect public affairs programs, sometimes leading to paralyzing pressures on journalists and program producers.

The public TV systems in West Germany are subsidized by license fees paid by viewers—a monthly fee per television set—and financed by revenues from advertising. Over the years, the percentage of commercial revenue has increased (at ZDF it is now 40 to 50 percent). However, advertising on ARD and ZDF is restricted (ZDF allows an average of only 20 minutes of commercials per weekday between 6 and 8 p.m.), and program sponsorship and product placement are regarded as unethical, although these practices sometimes occur.

Another element in the development of West German television has been the tense relationship between public TV and the small German film industry. Soon after its inception, many believed that TV would destroy traditional cinema culture, and the current generation of German directors asked for funds to help an already ailing movie industry. As the result of pressure from filmmakers and the film industry, a TV-film agreement was negotiated, which designated a portion of the public television corporations' budgets to be allocated for film coproductions, e.g., 12 million DM in 1986.* In addition to other public funding sources, this remains the most important support for a national cinema, although the domestic film industry has never been strong enough to compete successfully at the box office; only a handful of West German movies during the last 20 years have made a profit. Directors of the New German Cinema also complained about the aesthetic influence of the "amphibian movie," made to suit the big screen as well as the tiny box. Today, however, public TV has become the main employer for film professions and the most important film producer in the country, and these antagonisms have diminished somewhat. ZDF alone commissions independent (out-of-house) productions to the the tune of 260 million DM annually.

Yet for economically and artistically independent filmmakers, public TV does not offer enough airtime. With the advent of commercial TV there were some hopes for expanded opportunities to air independent work, but disillusionment has already set in. Alexander Kluge, who urged his filmmaker colleagues to bury their resentments towards commercial TV and join him in buying airtime on a private satellite, became quite isolated in his quest. He is now the lone producer of the *Filmmaker's Hour*, a one-hour weekly show on a commercial channel with a very small audience.

For more than 20 years public TV held a monopoly in broadcasting. Recent legal and political decisions promulgated by the Christian Democratic Party, however, have opened the airways to private, truly commercial TV. Now there are two additional national networks in operation, which are commercial, yet legally regulated. These are mainly broadcast via satellite and are available on a few cable networks that reach only a small number of German households. Initially, commercial TV met substantial popular

* As of today $1.00 US was about 1.65 DM, and 1 DM is about 61 cents.



Burkhard Steger directed *Pseudo*, with May Buchgraber as Ina, with support from KF. The film was aired by ZDF last December.

Courtesy filmmaker



Bill Viola's 1986 videotape *I Do Not Know What It Is I Am Like* benefitted from KF funding.
Photo: Kira Perov, courtesy Museum of Modern Art

opposition, and now, soon after its introduction, its opponents fear a deterioration of program quality. Supporters of commercial TV, the print media, and the movie industry, on the other hand, predict greater variety, and expect public TV to specialize in public affairs programs.

Quite confused by these rapid changes in the television landscape, ARD and ZDF have refused the scenario offered by their commercial counterparts and reacted competitively, trying to achieve higher ratings with more popular programs. Both public TV networks have also opted to compete with commercial companies for satellite transponder space. With these myriad developments of the recent past and immediate future, TV in West Germany will never be the same. The question for the future will be: Will we get more choices or just more of the same?

• DAS KLEINE FERNSEHSPIEL •

Das kleine Fernsehspiel (the Small Television Play) is a sub-department of ZDF's Television Drama and Film Department (Hauptredaktion Fernsehspiel und Film), as well as the title of the program it produces, usually broadcast at 10:15 on Tuesday evening. It is the only department in all of German television with a mandate to commission experimental and innovative independent work. The size of the actual department is inversely proportional to its reputation; under the direction of Eckart Stein, only 10 commissioning editors work for the program. Seven of them are based at ZDF headquarters in Mainz, which employs roughly 600 editors (*Redakteure*) and 3,000 employees. Bound only by ZDF's general program guidelines, the autonomous program policy of Das kleine Fernsehspiel (KF) is based on the concept of an open workshop for innovative TV and film, and, within the scope of ZDF programs, KF provides an alternative to mainstream TV with the privilege of not having to satisfy mass audiences. According to Stein, the program's title refers to being small but independent, while the word "play" hints at a space free from formal restrictions.

The editors who work for KF act as commissioning editors only, and all artistic decisions are left to the film/videomaker. With an overall annual budget of about 11 million DM, KF has a capacity to commission 40 productions per year. About half of the 40 productions fall within the category of *Kamerafilms*, with budgets of up to 130,000 DM each. In making a *Kamerafilm* there are no formal or administrative restrictions. The other works supported by KF are coproductions or more expensive productions, sometimes called *Studiofilmes*.

Since KF provides a rare chance for any independent video- or filmmaker, the number of proposals submitted is great—about 1,500 proposals every year. The application for a KF production has no specific form: from a script of many hundred pages to video sample reels to letters written in a coffeehouse—almost every kind of proposal is possible. The preferred form, however, is an essay in letter form. Work using any film gauge from super 8 to 35mm, any video standard, or combinations of video and film may be proposed and have been accepted. There are also no restrictions on length. Yet, judging by recent KF broadcasts, there is a strong preference for 60- to 90-minute movies or videotapes. (Proposals can be sent or given to individual editors or to the department: ZDF, Das kleine Fernsehspiel, Box 4040, 6500 Mainz, West Germany.) Each proposal sent to the department is read by two editors, who take turns performing this demanding job. Those ideas that spark the interest of at least one editor are then discussed at a monthly meeting of the entire team. Since each editor is free to make autonomous decisions, no vote takes place without extensive discussion. Although KF's common practice is to select projects which are unanimously supported, in the case of dissent, a minority opinion may prevail if the project is strongly defended by at least one member of the team.

When funding is approved, the film/videomaker is allowed unrestricted freedom in the realization of the idea and in administering the budget. The KF production procedure favors independent producers by paying about one third of the budget before production begins, alleviating the need for bank loans or additional grant funds. The second payment follows the presentation of rushes, and the final installment is paid after completion. Although there are no absolute rules, in most KF contracts the film/videomaker retains theatrical rights whereas ZDF claims the German-speaking TV rights. In the case of sales, the partners—ZDF and the producer—usually share the profits. And the commissioning editor often keeps in contact with the film/videomaker after completion and assists in marketing .

Because of KF's policy of noninterference during production, inexperienced film/videomakers run the risk of mismanagement. For many newcomers, a KF commission is the first jump into cold water—and, perhaps, the last chance to make a work under such ideal circumstances. There is little likelihood of a second commission since KF's practice is to work with as many different producers as possible. Only a handful of filmmakers have produced two or three (the maximum so far) KF projects. Additionally, the pressure to produce a broadcastable program puts pressure on a neophyte film- or videomaker.

Aware of these problems, KF has recently created another funding category designed as a kind of talent test. They now offer film/videomakers the opportunity to produce a short work, completely unrestricted in form and content, which will not be broadcast. Although each grant of 5,000 DM for these "auditions" represents next to nothing as film or tape budgets go, it is enough to make a short film on super 8 or a tape using consumer video formats. Regrettably, only six or seven of these mini-grants are awarded per year. However, KF's initiative is praiseworthy and demonstrates a commitment for newcomers absent elsewhere in the media business.

The institution of KF has not remained stagnant but has developed dynamically in the midst of ongoing discussions about the state of innovative TV and filmmaking. The structuring of KF as a workshop implies that it will contribute new work for these discussions and not concern itself with producing the next hot movie. The individual works that comprise its series are part of an innovative process, which necessarily includes some failed



***We Were So Beloved*, Manfred Kirchheimer's film about the German Jews of Washington Heights, New York, received support from KF.**
Courtesy filmmaker

experiments. Thus, watching KF each Tuesday resembles a roll of the dice. Sometimes it's awful. The next week there is a work that shouldn't be missed. Viewing a year's schedule retrospectively, however, even the less successful single programs appear to contribute to this process. And KF can boast a long list of highly successful movies, for example Jim Jarmusch's *Stranger than Paradise* and Lars van Trier's *The Element of Crime*. The television viewer must therefore be ready for anything whenever he or she tunes in KF. For a public TV program in Germany, this is unusual. Like most large corporations, the television companies tend to play it safe, and, besides KF, there is little space for experimentation in this context. Programming innovations are generally imported, such as those found on entertainment programs which are derived from similar shows in the U.S.

Within this atmosphere, an exceptional department like KF operates under considerable stress. Not only is there growing sensitivity to audience ratings among public TV producers, but also expectations from the independent filmmaking community itself. This pressure produces constant discussion, if not conflict, among members of the KF team—between those who favor more accepted methods of television production and those who want to risk accepting unusual ideas from independents. Years ago there were filmmakers who criticized KF for being too eager to follow the latest underground fashion. Today, however, there is a growing skepticism among the KF team toward the underground scene's latest flowers. Partly, this comes from the fear of falling into the trap of hipness, partly it is the result of the state of independent filmmaking, making it hard to judge fashionable bric-a-brac from truly innovative work. Such discussions about innovative filmmaking in the KF department and elsewhere in Germany suffer from the same problems as the discussion on contemporary art in general: there is a growing sense of helplessness in judging the aesthetic quality of art beyond what is already established and accepted.

With the inception of the new satellite channel 3-SAT, which ZDF shares with ORF (Austria) and SRG (Switzerland), there is a chance for KF to carry its experiments even further. KF has an option to program 10 all-day slots per year on this new channel, and plans are now underway for a series that takes advantage of television's character as a supplier of an incessant flow of images and information from various sources. With this in mind, the KF department will test the concept of combining live broadcasts with pretaped programs under various thematic umbrellas, with one theme explored during a full day's broadcast. There are several program ideas currently under discussion that might be included in such a combination: a live "citizens' forum," regional programs with documentaries from local groups (like the documentaries produced by independent workshops in Great Britain that are aired by Channel Four), games, interviews, satirical pieces, and new television forms (such as a popular science program based on alternative scientific research). A sort of trial run was already instituted by Eckart Stein, when he coordinated a day-long program on Berlin for the new French satellite channel, La Sept. KF editor Hans Kutnewsky, however, is now in charge of the pilot program for 3-SAT, a "Hungarian Day." Under the heading "The European Neighbor," similar programs related to the various countries sharing border with Germany are being considered. Since KF has no additional funds for these 10 days of programming for 3-SAT, however, the traditional commissioned productions will receive less. But a potentially greater obstacle to the plan was encountered when one wing of the ECS 1 satellite, which carried transponders for three channels including 3-SAT, did not unfold following its launch. The other wing can only carry two channels, and is still uncertain whether 3-SAT will be one of these.

Thanks to Eckart Stein and Liane Jessen of Das kleine Fernsehspiel for help in preparing this article.

Reinhard W. Wolf is a writer and film teacher as well as the cofounder and codirector, with Christiane Schauder, of KOB-8 Filmbüro, an organization in Mainz, West Germany, that supports super 8 filmmakers through a variety of services. Wolf and Schauder were profiled in the March 1987 issue of The Independent.

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VOCABULARY

Das kleine Fernsehspiel: The Small Television Play. A sub-department of the Television Drama and Film Department in the ZDF network. Also: the name of the time slot for productions of this department. Originally named after low-budget teleplays, now any kind of movie or video produced by the department.

Redakteur, Redakteurin: Editor, or commissioning editor. A term taken from the newspaper profession, now a title in radio and TV, which may cover diverse functions from journalistic to film directing or producing. A corresponding term in the movie industry for the job of a *Redakteurin* (f.) or *Redakteur* (m.) at the Kleine Fernsehspiel would be: Executive Producer in Charge of Production. For the actual filmmaker she or he is also a liaison with the the producer's big money (e.g., ZDF) or simply a sympathetic friend. A *Redakteur* is, however, never a film editor, an anchorperson, a studio boss, or a person with a camera in hand.

Kamerafilm: The KF department's name for a low-budget Kleine Fernsehspiel, which is quite often, but not necessarily, made by a filmmaker who combines the tasks of scriptwriter, director, editor, and/or cameraperson. A *Kamerafilm* also is a production category where the *Redakteur* exercises as little financial control and artistic influence as possible. Almost all foreign commitments of the Kleine Fernsehspiel department are *Kamerafilms*.



INTERVIEW WITH ECKART STEIN

DIRECTOR OF DAS KLEINE FERNSEHSPIEL, ZDF

Reinhard Wolf: Das kleine Fernsehspiel commissions some foreign work. Are there any quotas for foreign productions? What experience have you had with foreign productions, especially in the U.S.? And what do you think will develop from the experience you have gained there?

Eckart Stein: There are no quotas governing our foreign commissions, but we believe that our focus should remain in the German-speaking sphere. Our foreign commissions have been diverse. For example, we have a long-standing commitment in Hungary. There are regular relations with the U.K. via Channel Four and, recently, with France's new channel, La Sept. Finally, for many years we have often worked with independent filmmakers in the U.S. American independents have enriched our program and influenced our filmmakers—multiplied again via our audience—with many good ideas. But we have now come to realize that we should limit our commitment there, because we noted that we were having an impact on the product there. To put it inversely: because of KF certain American independent movies came into existence which were more directed towards European festival audiences than towards, for instance, an American audience.

RW: Can you outline the implications of this tendency?

ES: There is a filmmaking syndrome all over the world, which I regard as a cultural sickness, called festival culture. There are filmmakers whose conception of the world or of human beings is conceived only in terms of festivals. In many ways, we at KF have sinned as well—not only among American filmmakers but also at home. For a workshop set up to foster innovation it is logical that elitist or marginal productions geared toward insiders may be taken for really innovative work. As a German TV workshop this might be excusable in regards to German or German-speaking filmmakers, because we thereby mirror German reality. But it is hardly excusable to pursue this in the U.S., where we can easily provide a kind of luxurious ghetto. This happened several times, and we suddenly noticed that we had raised unhealthy amphibians: products half-European, half-American, which, however, drowned in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean.

RW: What are your experiences in finding production partners in the U.S.?

ES: For years I tried in vain to find partners for an institutional cooperation in the U.S. like our cooperation with Channel Four in the U.K. or La Sept in France. I had always hoped to find this kind of support in the public TV system, but my efforts failed. Occasionally they took programs we produced, but they never coproduced with us. Therefore, we have not slammed the door, but we became very skeptical. We decided that our participation might perhaps be more important for projects in the third world rather than keeping an art scene in the U.S. alive. There are perhaps regions in the world which accept help more gratefully—and I use this word carefully in a political sense and not in a moral sense—where help is used more effectively than in the U.S., where, I guess, we have acted too complacently.

RW: Is what you said about public TV also true of other potential U.S. partners, perhaps single stations or channels?

ES: They could be partners, but they have never contacted us.

RW: What about independent TV workshops in the U.S.? For instance, there were three ZDF-WGBH coproductions.

ES: Sure, but again that is an institution which would depend on our help so much that there is no real counterweight or real partnership to put on the scale. And as long as there are no equivalent or equally strong partner to work with we run into a lot of problems. One of the problems is that movies never get finished. There is also a different understanding about honoring contracts. When we make an agreement with an American filmmaker, we have to consider that the contract will be violated in a degree unknown to us in all the rest of the world. Even the poorest filmmakers in the poorest nations in the third world keep more faith with our agreements than the majority of our American partners. They have often used us to get start-up funds and sometimes let us wait for delivery of the finished work for years while they looked for additional revenues. We can not engage with such contractual mentalities, because our object is to broadcast and not to become a kind of movie museum for financial stunts. The effect would be—and we have actually experienced this—that an American finishes the movie after four or five years, which more often leaves behind financial ruins than a filmed contribution to a lively debate.

RW: This is perhaps an effect of the grant system in which you tap one fund after the other?

ES: Yes, but this system is incompatible with our contracts. It took us a long time to learn. There were people who said, "Yes, you will get the film in June," and in June then said, "You'll get it in October," and in October it's postponed until May. Finally we had to hunt for additional funds ourselves. Eventually we succeeded in raising more money and then hear, "Yes, when we receive it we will finish," but after half a year we ascertained that it was used for filling some holes in the budget . This is a behavior which we can hardly tolerate. It is also unfair to other filmmakers who fulfill their contracts. To sum up, there is indeed an incompatibility in the understanding of what a contract means.

RW: And there is probably no way to monitor a production in the U.S. effectively?

ES: Our working system is completely based on trust. Even with people who live just around the corner or on the next block this trust is seldom violated. There were, of course, disappointments concerning the product, but it rarely happens that we receive false information or that we are not informed at all. I rather believe that the situation develops because of the grant survival syndrome, that American filmmakers work from grant to grant and regard us as a matching or primary grant supplier, but not really as a partner. That's where difficulties originate.

RW: How is it possible to assist productions at all?

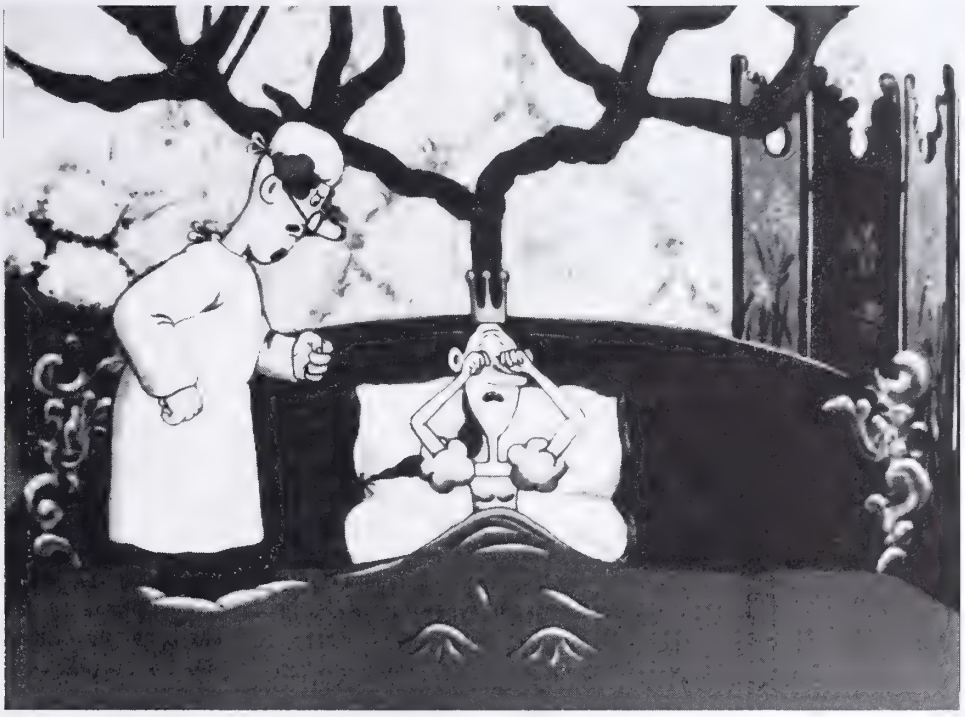
ES: There are various contributions we can and do make. Whenever we feel that there are uncertainties we will, of course, give advice or may even make recommendations. We help in ways which we regard as convenient, since we are clearly interested that those people don't go bust. In those cases our experiences here are naturally more extensive than in the U.S., where our ability to help is limited. Now and then Channel Four might step in when there is a need. However, through experience we learned that when we recommended a project to Channel Four which subsequently is not completed this irresponsible behavior prejudiced other projects we coproduced with the Channel. In effect, we became much more cautious in acting as a go-between for U.S. producers with Channel Four. Our basic view towards our American friends is quite depressing —and we do have quite a number of friends there, from many common projects.

RW: And there are some strong movies.

ES: Quite a number of strong movies came out of this!

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Glasnost and Georgian Cinema



Because the princess in Eduard Nazarov's animated short *Martynko* (1987) is named Raiska, the film has been mistaken as a commentary on Raisa Gorbachev.

Courtesy filmmaker

Karen Rosenberg

You have to help the talented ones. The untalented will get ahead on their own.
—a proverb related by Tengiz Abuladze

When you talk about film in the Soviet Union, you're apt to encounter the words "conscience" and "honesty" frequently. First and foremost, that's what the Soviet intelligentsia look for in filmmakers—in their lives and in their work. During the Brezhnev-era stagnation (as it's now called in the Soviet press), honesty and conscience meant not praising the government and the Party for what they had failed to deliver. Or, hinting as much as you could about what was wrong in society and not buckling under completely when bureaucrats got the hint. During my recent trip to the USSR, Soviet director Aleksandr Rekhviashvili reminded me that, in the Russian tradition, artists are supposed to be martyrs who sacrifice themselves for truth. And, although the Soviet Union is a lot bigger than the republic of Russia and the movies made there contain much that isn't considered purely art, the influence of that tradition can be felt in Soviet cinema.

In January, I spent a week in Tbilisi, the capital of the Soviet republic of Georgia. I went there as a guest of a children's film festival, and when I wasn't screening the kids' creations, I searched out filmmakers like Rekhviashvili. Then I stayed a week in Moscow, where the Filmmakers Association—the national organization of directors, critics, and film professionals—helped arrange screenings and more interviews. Because I speak Russian, I was able to get along without a translator, but that removed only one impediment to communication. "I didn't tell you everything I think," one filmmaker confessed with charming candor after our interview. To some extent, what appears as reluctance can be the result of sincere confusion. As a screenwriter explained to me, "We don't know how to talk among ourselves yet." Others, however, were willing to complain and criticize on tape, with no pleas to omit their names from the record. In doing so, they underline the importance of journalism in the project of *glasnost*, which is similarly reflected in recent Soviet documentary films. For example, when Juris Podnieks gives a microphone to members of Soviet society who had been shut out of public discourse—a burnt-out veteran of the war in Afghanistan, a young man who craves a lot of money, a follower of Hare Krishna—in *Is It Easy to Be Young?* (1986), audiences in the USSR listen.

With the greater openness of *glasnost*, Soviet fiction filmmakers also have more opportunities to tell the truth as they see it. The May 1986 congress that elected director Elem Klimov, a supporter of Gorbachev's policies, as the head of the Filmmakers Association simultaneously ousted conservatives from leadership positions and put them on the defensive. (The shift in the Writers Union, in contrast, was not as great.) Those who have lost their influence and prestige are known as the "injured" ones. Often, they are also the so-called "grey" directors who produced dull and orthodox films. The new leadership of the Association has introduced a system under which directors will be able to work for any studio in the Soviet Union, rather than working through only one, as was common practice in the past. Filmmakers that produce hits are sure to do well, but the "grey" ones may have to scrounge for work in television or take jobs as assistant directors. There's even talk of setting up a fund to help them financially until they find other employment.

In this new era, the most important art is no longer that which is boring and predictable, as it has often been since Stalin's day. But there are some who say it could be even more vital. The pro-*perestroika* (restructuring) forces break down into those who are more pro than others. From some film



Elem Klimov's historical film *Come and See* (1985) tells the story of a teenage partisan in Nazi-occupied Byelorussia in 1943. Klimov recently resigned as secretary general of the national Filmmakers Association in order to begin work on a new film.

Courtesy International Film Exchange

BELOW:

***Is It Easy to Be Young?* (1986), produced at Riga Film Studios by Juris Podnieks, is a film about youth subcultures and generation gaps in the Soviet Union and has provoked much discussion.**

Courtesy International Film Exchange

professionals I heard complaints about the slow pace of change. A number of them charge that the Moscow film school (VGIK), which has produced many "grey" directors and employed others as instructors, still emphasizes "correct" politics and traditional techniques rather than creativity, individuality, and experimentation. Debate on this topic has been acrimonious and heated.

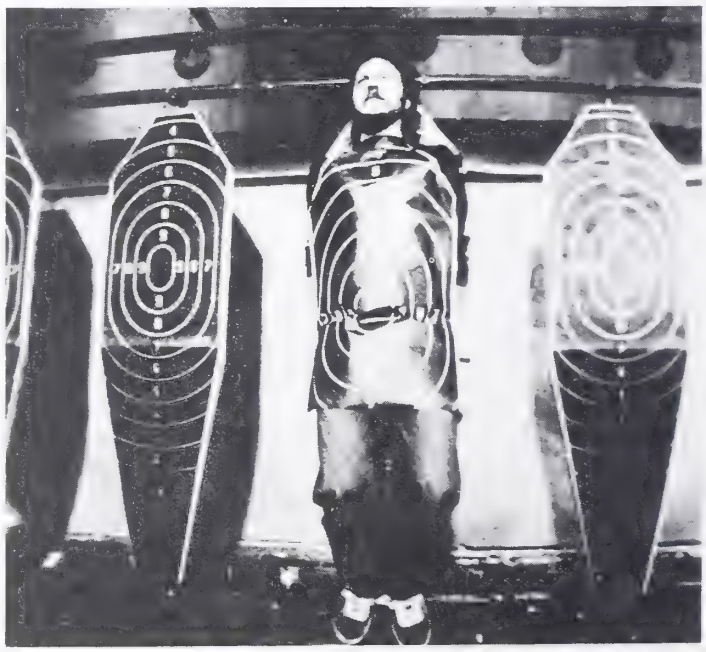
And some of the more liberal elements in Soviet society are scornful of popular directors who exploit formerly forbidden themes to achieve box office success. "Now a lot is being said about Stalin and Stalinism, and I actually think there's some opportunism in this, as strange as that may seem," Soviet director Irakli Kvirikadze commented. "People are making their careers on this material. In the film archives, everybody is sitting and looking at clips about Stalin, Stalin, Stalin. They're no longer interested in anything else. Before, the very same people were all praising Brezhnev, Brezhnev, Brezhnev." A considerable number of the Soviet intelligentsia demands risk in art, and fashionable choices make them curl their lips.

When *glasnost* has pushed back the limits, what remains risky? The debate over which foreign films to import to the USSR provides some idea. In a recent issue of the journal *Soviet Screen*, Klimov wrote that the works of Marco Ferreri, Liliana Cavani, and Pier Paolo Pasolini, which contain a great deal of brutality and/or eroticism, will not, he thinks, be shown in the near future in the USSR. (Pornography, war-mongering, and anti-Soviet agitation are forbidden by law in the USSR, although what these words mean in practice is always a matter of interpretation.) It is possible that the leadership of the Association has nothing against these directors' work but doesn't want to press too hard too fast for fear of triggering a sharp reaction against *glasnost*. After all, during a visit to the U.S. in 1986, Klimov was quoted as saying that he liked *Blue Velvet*. And, in some instances, the film bureaucracy has proved more permissive than viewers. Soviet journals contain sections in which film officials respond to readers' opinions. There bureaucrats have argued that particular foreign movies are not anti-Soviet or overly erotic, while their readers believe the opposite. Although Klimov stepped down as head of the Filmmakers Association last February—in order to direct a new film—Andrei Smirnov, his replacement, probably won't change the organization's liberal orientation.

It may take a while to erode the puritanical and paranoid legacy of Stalinism, however. Animator Eduard Nazarov has had some difficulty convincing people that his short film *Martynko* (1987) is *not* about Raisa Gorbachev, even though one character is a princess with the nickname Raiska. The film is based on a work by Boris Shergin first published decades ago, as Nazarov has vehemently reminded everyone who's asked—including an employee of Goskino, the state agency that decides how many prints of a film will be made and where they'll be shown. If, because of a mistaken interpretation, this delightful fairy tale about magic cards and apples isn't widely distributed, it would be a shame. Westerners have often been accused of reading politics into Soviet art. Sometimes we do—and sometimes the Soviets do, too.

And then there's the sticky matter of so-called "formalism" in the arts. Tatlin, Malevich, and Lissitzky—to name a few of the most prominent Russian modern visual artists of the early post-Revolution period—have had a much greater impact on western art and graphic design than in their native land. And the Soviet break with international modernism is even greater in film—despite the importance of Soviet filmmakers like Eisenstein to that movement. Avant-garde films could never enter the country as easily as art books, by post or by hand. I checked with various Soviet directors who told me they were interested in formal innovation, but none had heard of Maya Deren or Stan Brakhage. A few Soviet film historians have, however, since I dug out a 1975 issue of the Soviet theoretical journal *Questions of Film Art* that contains an article blasting *Film Culture* for its art-for-art's-sake orientation. In Tbilisi I asked Klimov-supporter Eldar Shengelaya, head of the Georgian Filmmakers Association, whether it would now be possible to show U.S. experimental films in the USSR. He answered, "We haven't gotten to that point yet."

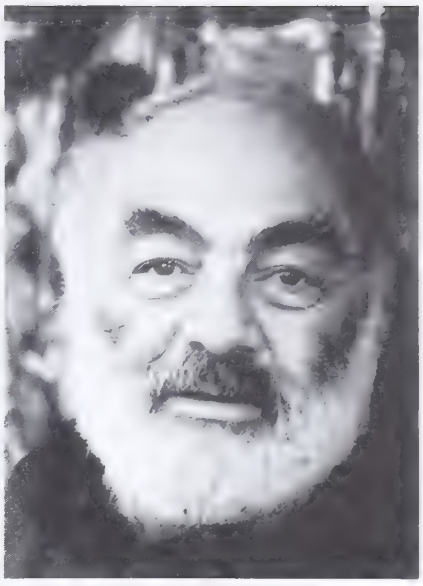
Over the past few decades, when Soviet filmmakers have experimented with cinematic form, it was not to make films about film but—almost always—films about honesty and conscience. Political liberals in the USSR tend to be less conservative when it comes to form, and vice versa. Tarkovsky is only the most famous example. Tengiz Abuladze deserves to be known not just for *Repentance* but for the other films in his trilogy about tyranny and its victims. The first of these, *Supplication* (variously translated as *The Plea*, *A Prayer*, *The Entreaty*, *The Appeal*, and *Invocation*) is a





Sergei Paradjanov and Dodo Abachidze's *The Legend of Suram Fortress* (1985) features a number of tableaux vivants and has been related stylistically to dance films and early silent films.

Courtesy International Film Exchange



After a term in prison, the celebrated Ukrainian filmmaker Sergei Paradjanov found a haven at Gruziafilm's studio in Tbilisi, Georgia.

Photo: Sergei Ivanov

visually powerful work, a carefully-composed black and white counterpoint to the Georgian poetry of Vazha Pshavela on the soundtrack. (The film can be found at the Pacific Film Archive in Berkeley.) "This is neither a biographical film nor an adaptation of one of Pshavela's works for the screen," Abuladze told me, but an attempt to present the world of the poet's mind—the fears, hopes, and questions that gnawed at him. The transience of all things made the material world seem unreal to the poet and, in Abuladze's film, this is conveyed through the use of solarization and other photographic techniques. A woman in white represents goodness, beauty, and truth and is contrasted with a society that demands that the hands of fallen enemies be severed and displayed. The hero, who perceives that the enemy he has slain is an honorable man, refuses to perform this act and is then martyred for his stance by his village. In the Brezhnev period, Goskino made only 150 copies of this film about conscience, for screenings restricted to Soviet film clubs and cultural centers.

Other avant-garde films were banned outright in that era. Nodar Managadze showed me his *Legends That Became Life* made in 1977, only recently released for distribution in the USSR. Its strength, too, lies in its careful, elegantly composed shots and unexpected editing, which juxtaposes several sketchy narratives: in Georgia—somewhere, sometime—a church is being built, a man is looking for a wife, a priest is teaching his craft to a novitiate, while a battle with an unspecified enemy goes on in the misty background, creating a vague impression of gloom and danger. Perhaps this film was shelved for what it lacked—optimism, a neat plot, concrete historical data. "Sometimes [censorship] was just chance," Managadze remarked softly, philosophically.

Among recent Soviet films, I was struck by Rekhviashvili's *The Step* (1986), which skillfully employs a slow camera moving through narrow rooms and corridors to build a suffocating atmosphere. In the young male hero's comic, surrealistic apartment, everyone who enters has a strange obsession—growing mushrooms in the basement, placing a puppy on a revolving phonograph turntable, watering exuberant plants—that ultimately seems trivial, boring, alienating. By framing his characters in thresholds and doorways, Rekhviashvili emphasizes their isolation, their inability to enter into each other's lives. In the final sequence, however, the hero rejects claustrophobic space for the open hills. "I don't know how we should live, but we should live differently," the director, a former cameraman, said. Although his film is in Georgian, there is nothing at all provincial about the problems it addresses. "All my films are built around eternal ethical concepts—Christian moral principles—which exist in America, Georgia, Germany, wherever," he explained.

It's probably no coincidence that these three unconventional films were made in Georgia, since even under Brezhnev the Gruziafilm studio in Tbilisi was characterized by its greater acceptance of unconventional talent. In the twenties, it had its avant garde, exemplified by Kote (Konstantin) Mikaberidze's rarely seen *My Grandmother* (1929), in which a paper-pushing bureaucrat is skewered by a gigantic pen. One of the most formally interesting filmmakers working in Georgia today is Sergei Paradjanov. After his imprisonment in the 1970s (for trafficking in art objects or on charges related to homosexuality and pornography, depending on which western sources you read), he moved to Tbilisi, where he eventually made *The Legend of Suram Fortress* (1985).

Despite the well-known fact that Stalin came from Georgia, this region has a tradition of tolerance of various religions and peoples. And cultural traditions in Georgia aren't counted in decades. When I asked one-time film director Rezo Gabriadze about movie-making in Georgia, he traced it to the theater of the Byzantine Greeks. "Filmmakers all over the world think that before them there was nothing, and they came like messiahs and brought us art. But that's just a disease of youth and superficiality," he noted. Abuladze and Nodar Managadze, among others, studied at the Georgian theater institute in Tbilisi (the school recently added a film-directing department). Gabriadze's marionette theater company and the Rustaveli Theater in Tbilisi enjoy international fame for their imaginative productions. The influence of theater is obvious when Georgian stage actors appear on-screen.

Distance from the center, too, probably helped give Georgian cinema room to create some alternatives to socialist realism. "We are a small, provincial studio," Shengelaya told me. "A provincial studio is allowed a little naughtiness." For example, Georgian comedies by Eldar Shengelaya and others feature anti-heroes with human weaknesses, far from the idealized New (socialist) Man who appears as a stock character in plenty of Moscow film studio productions. And then there's the crucial matter of political support. Abuladze says that the former first secretary of the central



Eldar Shengelaya, head of the Georgian Filmmakers Association.

Photo: Sergei Ivanov

Shoot Films Not Rockets



The American-Soviet Film Initiative (ASFI) is an exciting experiment: an attempt to bring filmmakers together so they can exchange films, plan coproductions, discuss ideas. Although officially established in June 1987, ASFI grew out of earlier talks between Mark Gerzon, a California writer and producer, and Elem Klimov, whose directing credits include *Come and See* and *Farewell*. The first Entertainment Summit in March 1987 brought to the U.S. Soviet directors (including Klimov and Eldar Shengelaya), television commentator Viktor Posner, and a prominent film critic, an actress, and a screenwriter. Viktor Dyomin, the film critic and Klimov-supporter, noted that less than half of the Soviet delegation consisted of Communist Party members, adding that a successful filmmaker need no longer be in the Party.

There's no doubt that this visit was a child of the parents *glasnost* (greater openness) and *perestroika* (restructuring). In meetings with producers, directors, school children, and others, the first Entertainment Summit stressed the stereotypes of Americans who appear in Soviet films, and the reverse. Clips from both countries were screened and, not surprisingly, it was found that we act like fat-cat, loud-mouthed ugly Americans in many of their movies, while they come across as poker-faced, underhanded automatons in many of ours. The decision not to broadcast the *Amerika* mini-series in the USSR was a good one, Klimov asserted, because it would only have angered Soviets and worsened relations between the two countries.

The proposed solution to Cold War representations was that we should criticize, but not ban, such distortions. "We feel that the best defense against films which dehumanize the other is the personal ethical responsibility of a cinematographer," said the draft of a press release jointly written by Soviets and Americans at the Rockefeller family estate in Pocantico Hills, New York. Both Soviet and U.S. films should be shown on television in the other country, declared Shengelaya. Others added that Soviets should play themselves in our films and the other way around. Someone proposed a bumper sticker saying, "Shoot films, not rockets." Meanwhile, warnings were voiced about substituting positive simplifications for negative ones.

The Soviet delegation was also critical of its own film tradition, including *Solo Voyage*, reportedly the Russian *Rambo*. Screenwriter Rustam Ibragimbekov recounted that a Brezhnev-era bureaucrat forbade him to mention a round breast in one of his film. "I asked her," he reported, "'Have you ever seen a square one?'" Klimov was interviewed widely about his once-banned films and about the changes signalled by his election to the leadership of the Filmmakers Association (see accompanying article). Rarely has the Soviet film industry gotten such concentrated attention in the U.S. media.

According to the *LA Times*, some Soviet directors wanted to discuss concrete projects during their visit and were disappointed that this didn't happen. Still, a number of general proposals came out of the meetings, including exchanges of film students, films, and videotapes; joint professional conferences; and the employment of Americans to play themselves in Soviet films and vice versa. At the June announcement of ASFI's establishment, executive director Barbara Coffman also promised an information and referral service and coproduction consultation.

In July, an ASFI press conference talked of a proposed computerized exchange of storyboards between the U.S. and the USSR, reciprocal visits of film critics, and a monthly newsletter. Subsequently, the periodical *Kinosphere* has appeared.

Held in January 1988, Entertainment Summit II was hosted by the Soviets in Moscow and Tbilisi. During a 10-day visit, nine American film and television professionals (including actors Keith Carradine and Dennis Weaver) and ASFI staffers met with high-level Soviet film officials. In fact, "key players" was an oft-repeated word at the press conference at a Hollywood hotel held immediately following the second summit. Yet such diplomacy may pay off. According to ASFI vice president Lindsay Smith, the Soviets were willing to talk about how they could structure their production system so U.S. filmmakers could work with them. Because of *perestroika*, every Soviet film agency is in flux, and this may have created an opening for U.S. input. Another example of this "summit" orientation is the plan to send excerpts of U.S. fiction features and documentaries to the Supreme Soviet for screening and to show clips of Soviet films in the U.S. Congress.

The results of the second meeting were more specific than the first. ASFI established television, documentary, and animation divisions, and an exchange of documentary filmmakers is in the works for this spring. Also, the group facilitated an agreement with Soviet television to screen U.S. animation. Ilmar Taska, who serves as the international vice president of ASFI and its coproduction consultant, says of the animation program, "At present it's a non-currency deal, but we hope that later there will be money." A Saturday morning cartoon program for children is currently being arranged, an evening of animation for adults is under discussion, and Taska says he's willing to consider work by U.S. independents as well as films from the studios.

"We've been involved with independents from the beginning," ASFI president Gerzon told me. "The Sundance Institute and the Independent Feature Project were among the sponsors of the first summit. The Soviets should get to know our film system in all its complexity—they think we are run by big companies. Coproductions are more likely to involve independents because of the lower budgets." In fact, Lindsay Smith, an independent producer, has signed an agreement with the Soviets for *The Superpower Mirror*, a joint documentary exploring our negative screen images of each other. ASFI is not making such deals, Gerzon cautions, just facilitating the meetings of Soviets and Americans, who can then decide how to cooperate. Neither is it a distributor, though it is helping to introduce Soviet film officials to people in this country who can explain how to use our distribution system.

Some have asked Gerzon if he is being used by the Soviets who want U.S. coproduction dollars and revenues from film sales. "I'm 'using' them as much as they're 'using' me. I'm letting the democratizing, liberalizing elements 'use' me to support their goals," he replies. "For this to really work, they must eventually let Soviet people, like writers and actors, travel to the U.S.—it can't just be Americans going to them."

ASFI, 20110 Rockport Way, Malibu, CA 90265, tel.: (213) 456-6144

KR



Filmmakers Nana Jorjadze and Irakli Kvirikadze with their children.

Photo: Sergei Ivanov



Nana Jorjadze's *Robinsonada, or My English Grandfather* (1986) dramatizes the life of a British telegraph operator who works in a small village in Georgia during the Revolutionary period.

Courtesy International Film Exchange

committee of the Georgian Communist Party, Eduard Shevardnadze, was a major force behind the growth of the arts in the republic. Among other things, he encouraged Abuladze to write the scenario for *Repentance* and then shoot it. When the film was banned in 1984, he assured the director that its time would come. As the current Soviet foreign minister, Shevardnadze has voiced his support for the American-Soviet Film Initiative (see sidebar).

In short, if we'd been looking, we might have seen the seeds of *glasnost*. "I restructured myself a long time ago," a number of Georgian directors told me, not without bravado. But only Georgian director Otar Ioseliani's name was well-known in our film circles—and he has worked in France. We are making up for lost time, however. Festivals in the U.S. are programming more Soviet and, specifically, more Georgian films. The Museum of Modern Art in New York City is putting together a retrospective of Georgian cinema, slated for a few years hence. And the International Film Exchange's "New Voices from the Soviet Cinema" series currently touring the country includes two short films made in the directing department of the Georgian theater institute and at Gruziafilm: Teimuraz Babluani's *Migrating Sparrows* (1979) and Nana Jorjadze's *Journey to Sopot* (1981). I haven't seen Babluani's film but many Georgian directors have spoken about it with great enthusiasm. Nana Jorjadze's tale of two shysters is more than a look at the seamy side of Soviet life; the film exhibits wit and sympathy for the friendship of tramps on the road. There are other Georgian women working in film to keep in mind as well, like Lana Gogoberidze, director of *Interviews on Personal Matters* (1978) and *Turnover* (1982), of the older generation, and Nana Djanelidze, Abuladze's collaborator on *Repentance*, of the younger.

On one hand, the Gorbachev era has been good for the Soviet avant-garde. The new leadership of the Filmmakers Association unbanned unconventional works, and the recently-appointed liberals in Goskino have been distributing them. But there's some concern about what *perestroika* will mean for difficult films. Under a new system, which will apply to the entire Soviet film industry in 1989, each studio must become financially self-sufficient. Yet avant-garde films may not get the 14 to 15 million viewers needed for financial success—and then who will want, or be able, to fund them?

Kvirikadze, the head of a production unit for young directors at Gruziafilm in the process of being established, is not at all nostalgic for the old, centralized system, but he has some concerns about the new order. "When the government paid us, then the government, in the shape of Mr. Pavlionok [of Goskino], was the master and said, to put it crudely, 'I dispense the money, so go shoot what I need and want.' [Directors] were criticized because of the ideological liberties they took, but not because their films weren't box office successes. It was possible to do films for festivals." Traditionally, Georgian cinema has been a showcase item for the USSR, because of the international prizes won by a number of Georgian films. For example, Rekhviashvili's *Georgian Chronicle of the Nineteenth Century* racked up four at Mannheim in 1980, and Kvirikadze won awards at Grenoble, Locarno, Gabravo, and Belgrade for various films. Jorjadze's *Robinsonada, or My English Grandfather* (1986), also in IFEX's travelling series, received a Camera d'Or for the best first feature at Cannes in 1987.

Perhaps, at Gruziafilm and elsewhere, more popular films will be able to allow production of those that might show a loss. And these days there's talk of the Soviet republics subsidizing their own studios, because otherwise they won't break even. But I don't have to explain the problem of marketplace survival to anyone familiar with independent cinema in the U.S. That's something we could tell Soviet filmmakers a thing or two about.

Karen Rosenberg is a writer whose work has appeared in Sight and Sound, *the* Nation, *the* Boston Globe, *and elsewhere.*

© 1988 Karen Rosenberg



Along with the Georgian film studio Gruziafilm, the Leningrad studio where Sergei Ovcharov's *Believe It or Not* (1983) was produced is considered a place to watch.

Courtesy International Film Exchange.

RADICAL MEDIA REVIEW: THIRD WORLD NEWSREEL ENTERS THIRD DECADE



Garment workers in a nonunionized shop in Christine Choy's 1976 documentary *From Spikes to Spindles.*

Courtesy Third World Newsreel

Coco Fusco

Activist media wasn't born in the sixties. Its antecedents can be found in the work of socially conscious documentarians such as John Grierson, early Soviet newsreel filmmakers like Dziga Vertov, and the Film and Photo League productions of the thirties, not to mention in the muckraking journalism of the late nineteenth century. With the rise of radical politics in the U.S. during the sixties—which drew strength from the constitutional right to free expression and dissent along with the growing influence of the mass media in political affairs and the increasing availability of cheap, portable equipment—an alternative media culture arose and has remained firmly entrenched ever since.

At the center of this movement was Newsreel, a group of filmmakers who came together in 1967 to use cinema as a tool for empowerment and social change. Over the last 20 years the membership and filmmaking styles of the group—renamed Third World Newsreel in 1971—have changed, but the spirit and objectives remain the same. And after two tumultuous decades, they decided it was time to organize an event that would remind everyone, including themselves, that their survival—especially in light of the slow death of other institutions born in the sixties—is something to celebrate. The TWN retrospective, held in December 1987 at the Collective for Living Cinema in New York City, offered a rich array of works that mark the many transformations that activist filmmaking has undergone. The program might surprise those who have forgotten the sources of many of the terms we now take for granted and can also serve as a necessary reference to ongoing debates over the relationship between radical content and form.

Formed in New York City as a collective with socialist ideals, in its first year Newsreel acted as a kind of fifth column of Students for a Democratic Society, the Black Panthers, and the Young Lords, documenting these groups' activities and distributing films from revolutionary Cuba and Vietnam. Like many other radical political groups of the period, they adopted strategies and philosophies from third world revolutionaries, forming guerilla-like "propaganda" units throughout the country. The early films were shot in black and white, often with hand-held cameras, and they exhibit the war footage quality doubtlessly sought by the group. Skillfully edited with creative integration of popular music, they embody the American version of the camera-as-weapon aesthetic. The world view of the early works is one of inevitable conflict between disempowered communities and the state. Emphasizing collective social goals and materialist political analysis, the films repeatedly stress self-determination achieved in the face of repressive and excessive state power.

The early shorts *Black Panther* (1968) and *Bobby Seale* (1969) outline the Black Panther Party philosophy against a backdrop of demonstrations and Panther military exercises. In both films, leaders Seale, Huey Newton, and Eldridge Cleaver explain key ideas underlying the Panthers' activities. They articulate the necessity for a revolutionary vanguard and the interconnections of a domestic form of colonialism that oppresses minority groups in the U.S. and international colonialism that bespeaks the interests of the ruling capitalist elite. Speaking from prison, Newton and Seale assess incarceration, both symbolic and actual, as a condition that unites all black people in this country and incisively call for a political definition of race as a condition for radical social change.

With *El Pueblo Se Levanta* (1968) Newsreel accomplished a well-rounded portrait of the Young Lords Party, a Puerto Rican group in East Harlem's El Barrio who used tactics of direct action to improve living conditions in their community. Here, the party's philosophy is illustrated by documentation of the group's actions—for example, the takeover of a local church to use for free children's breakfasts and educational programs and the organization of marches to protest the arrest and mistreatment of one of their members. Party members speak about the internalized oppression Puerto Ricans suffer due to the overwhelmingly negative images of their culture that surround them and the importance of culture and education in the development of national pride. Interspersed throughout are poetry readings, which evoke barrio experiences, and music that provides the rhythmic backbone for montage.

During the late sixties activism within minority communities was either represented by the media as terrorism or largely ignored, whereas the largely white, middle-class student movement against U.S. involvement in Vietnam was a media

favorite from the onset. Rather than rehashing clichéd images of protest, Boston Newsreel's *Boston Draft Resistance Group* (1968) provides insights into the strategies behind a remarkably successful effort to assist over 150 people in legally evading the draft every week. The film follows the group through planning sessions, sit-ins at local draft boards, door-to-door consciousness-raising, and even as far as Vietnam, where they were able to retrieve an American POW. In *Summer '68* (1969), the Boston group's work is set in the larger context of mass demonstration around the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. We see them participating in producing the left-wing propaganda of that era, including an anti-war newspaper edited by Vietnam veterans and a hilarious televised talk show with representatives of Newsreel, SDS, and the underground newspaper *RAT*, interrupted by unidentified intruders in true sixties "happening" style.

Another film from the same period, *Amerika* (1969), targets the interest groups whose desires and frustrations fed into the escalating anti-war movement. Interviews with embittered unemployed or underemployed youth, disenchanted GIs returned from Vietnam and black liberation movement leaders serve as markers of popular sentiment. These are juxtaposed with protest marches and startling statistics on U.S. wealth and the relative impoverishment of many of its citizens. The more anecdotal and self-consciously ironic *Garbage* (1968) shows the political antics of a group of New York City youths who deposited large quantities of refuse in front of Lincoln Center during a city-wide garbage collectors' strike. In the Dada tradition, this act becomes a literal metaphor for the decay of city affairs.

Shown alongside these early Newsreel films was a poetic, magnificently edited homage to the Vietnamese revolutionary leader, *Seventy-Nine Springtimes of Ho Chi Minh* (1969), by Santiago Alvarez, the father of Cuban documentary film. In this film radical aesthetics and politics converge in an impressionistic biography that traces Ho Chi Minh's years as a militant student, his founding the Vietnamese Communist Party, and his rise to the leadership of the Vietnamese National Liberation Front. Scores of delicately interwoven images accompanied by poems and music present him as politician, poet, and revolutionary idol.

By the early seventies, changes in the direction of social activism in the U.S. and internal criticism within the Newsreel collective led to a reevaluation of the organization's philosophy and goals. Women and minorities who had been trained by Newsreel pressured the group to restructure its white, male orientation. After a series of "self-criticism" sessions, Newsreel became Third World Newsreel, and many of the original Newsreel members left the collective. The reconstituted organization affirmed its commitment to minority and women's interests, adopting an approach to filmmaking that relied on personal testimony and



A Move member is arrested by SWAT forces in Hugh King and Lamar Williams' powerful documentary *Black and Blue*, the opening film in the Third World Newsreel retrospective at the Collective for Living Cinema in New York City.

Courtesy Third World Newsreel

emphasized traditional documentary forms. These changes in formal strategy were most likely influenced by the group's increasing dependency on government support for producing and distributing educational media as well as by its political beliefs. Produced during this transition, *The Women's Film* (1971) provides a sign of this new direction. The San Francisco Newsreel Women's Caucus made this film, which consists of interviews with women from different ethnic and economic backgrounds. Each discusses the frustrations they experience in their work in and outside the home and in their marriages. Simple and direct, the film implicitly critiques the lack of psychological depth and lack of attention to subjectivity that permeated the male dominated radicalism of the period.

Some of the most interesting issues discussed in *The Women's Film* are the ways in which husbands exert control by policing their wives. Third World Newsreel has consistently stressed that the policing of specific groups was an important strategy used to suppress radicalism in the sixties and continues to be a barometer of state attitudes toward dissent. Christine Choy and Susan Robeson's *Teach Our Children* (1972), for example, examines the 1971 Attica prisoner rebellion and the official reaction that culminated with the death of 31 inmates and guards shot by National Guardsmen. Interviewed prisoners discuss the inhumane treatment to which they are forced to submit, and this material is coupled with footage from other prison rebellions of the period. A later film by Choy and Cynthia Maurizio, *Inside Women Inside* (1978), portrays the lives of incarcerated women at Riker's Island and in North Carolina, showing how they cope with disrupted family life and responsibilities and how they are forced into virtual slave labor. Once again, the work provides insightful political analysis together with poignant testimony, stressing the reality of the U.S. prison system as a source of cheap labor.

The need for exploitable labor in this country has been constant since the end of slavery and perhaps has done more to create this country's legendary melting pot than any other single phenomenon. Choy's *From Spikes to Spindles* (1976) traces the development of New York's Chinatown from the arrival of immigrants from Canton and Hong Kong in the mid-nineteenth century to contemporary community response, police violence, and real estate speculation. From the film we learn how economic fluctuations affect racist stereotypes and how different industries absorb immigrant labor forces as they enter the country. Behind the comparison of the colonial situation of Hong Kong and the status of minority groups in the U.S. are lingering questions about the so-called American dream: Can one speak of an improved standard of living when young people are blackmailed into low-paying jobs and garment industry bosses do everything possible to maintain sweatshops? Although the filmmaker rarely asks such questions of the subjects in the documentary, she consistently makes them obvious to the audience.

The Third World Newsreel retrospective's most recent films take up issues that have been part of the Newsreel repertoire since its inception.

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now presented in a more sharply hewn, investigative style, and of course, in color. *Namibia: Independence Now!* (1985) treats the theme of third world struggles for nationalist liberation in relation to one of South Africa's most misunderstood and exploited neighbors. Shot in Zambia and Angola, this portrait of SWAPO shows the infrastructure for a new society already in the making—health care units, universal education, community projects, and women's organizations. Combined with this are astute analyses of how and why Namibia's dependence on South Africa prevents its mineral wealth from becoming the source of its own modernization and political independence.

In *The Marriage Dinner* (1986) Third World Newsreel moved from traditional documentary forms to docudrama, television style. Produced by a training workshop, the story concerns the most common dilemma facing some Central American refugees in the U.S.—the absence of basic civil rights that results from the U.S. government's double standard regarding political refugees. A young Salvadoran woman, living with relatives after being forced to flee her country because of political activity, arranges to pay an assimilated middle-class Chicano to marry her so she can obtain citizenship. The groom arrives for a family celebration and is confronted with problems that are part of a very distant culture. His presence, his ignorance, and his hypocrisy elicit bitterness and frustration about the unfulfilled promises of U.S. democracy from the bride-to-be's Salvadoran uncle. The film suffers from stilted scripting and uneven performances, and it is particularly awkward to find this family speaking English for no other reason than to improve the chances for broadcasting. Still, the story is accurate and important, shedding light on very intimate dilemmas that are difficult to document.

Hugh King and Lamar Williams' *Black and Blue* (1987), the most recent film in the retrospective, opened the two-weekend event. An impressive and frightening account of police abuse of people of color in Philadelphia over the last two decades, this film improves upon the old Newsreel style. In its skillful combination of documentary and television news footage the film creates a searing indictment of police brutality and illustrates the long trajectory of community response. Beginning with the 1982 African Liberation Day March against Genocide at the United Nations intercut with the 1985 March against Racism in Philadelphia, the film then chronicles episode after episode of excessive police violence—from the shooting of Winston C X Hood while handcuffed to raids on Black Panther offices in the early seventies to the series of attacks on Move Family Africa that ended with the aerial bombing of their house, the resulting decimation by fire of neighboring houses, and the death of several Move members in 1985.

One of the saddest lessons to be learned from *Black and Blue* is how little has changed since the sixties in terms of bettering the conditions for most people of color in this country. The words of Malcolm X and Huey Newton, both extensively quoted in the film, need not be revised to fit the present. But another sad observation is that few politically astute activists and radical theorists have offered new insights into the same old situation. Twenty years after the founding of Newsreel, we live with a diminished sense of expectancy about cataclysmic social change and concentrate instead on developing strategies for survival.

Third World Newsreel's adaptation and growth during these last two decades reflects these larger changes. They have been interested less in shocking their spectators than in educating them, less concerned with using film to analyze the rhetorical power of images and montage than with building voices and visions of people who are virtually absent from mainstream media. And they insist in their unswerving belief in the relevatory power of cinema, as attorney William Kunstler underscored at the opening night screening with an anecdote about the camera's function as witness. He related a story about a case in which he defended several Iroquois Indians who had been shot by Pennsylvania policemen. The incident occurred across the road from a feature film shoot where a camera operator inadvertently filmed the police in action. Months later, upon hearing about the trial, the camera operator sent his cutaways from California at the eleventh hour and clinched the defense's case.

It could be argued that uncompromising faith in cinema's "truth" overlooks decades of theoretical research on the formal means by which cinema constructs ideology. At times, it also runs the risk of miming mainstream strategies and, in the process, excluding information that might undermine the seemingly self-evident "facts" being expounded. But Third World Newsreel operates in a self-consciously reactive manner, as an antidote to the appalling lacunae and ideological narrowness of contemporary mainstream media. And, in light of the circumscribed information we receive about what happens in the U.S. and about the effects of our foreign policy, Third World Newsreel's radically different visions are as crucial as they are revealing.

Coco Fusco is the editor of Reviewing Histories: Selections from New Latin American Cinema, *a recently released collection of essays published by Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center in Buffalo.*

AFTER SCHOOL SPECIAL: CHICAGO'S COMMUNITY TELEVISION NETWORK



Young videomakers from Latino Youth and the Youth Communications program tape the first segment of a *Hard Cover* program on teenage lifestyles.

Photo: John Caldwell

Barbara Tuss

For the past 13 years, the Community Television Network of Chicago has been providing video training to low income and minority youth in three Chicago neighborhoods: Pilsen, the heart of the Mexican community; Austin, a primarily black neighborhood; and Uptown, a community with a mix of black, Hispanic, Appalachian, and, more recently, Asian residents. Founded in 1974 by Denise Zaccardi, a former reading teacher at an alternative high school, the project grew out of her efforts to find ways to motivate her students.

Zaccardi's decided to use video to encourage the students to explore and document their neighborhoods and thus probe the strengths, problems, and issues of their communities. The videotapes the students created described a very different picture of their world than that which they saw on the local news. Through their work with CTVN, the students began to grapple with questions of their own identities and cultural heritage, as well as their neighborhoods' place within the larger city. Samples of early CTVN work include tapes like *The Latin Queens*, which consists of interviews with teenage women about their lives as gang members; *Keep County Open*, a documentary on the struggle to keep Cook County Hospital open; and *Off the Wall*, an exploration of neighborhood graffiti. Starting with the Neighborhood Program, the name given to Zaccardi's original project, CTVN has expanded to include Video Services, a production company that provides advanced training seminars in addition to the hands-on experience of videomaking. And Video Services' offshoot, the Grassroots Production Fund, now produces tapes for community organizations that could not otherwise afford them, thanks to a grant from the MacArthur Foundation.

"My family didn't expect much from me, stated Javier Vargas, one of two students honored for outstanding achievement at a CTVN anniversary celebration last fall. "My brothers dropped out of school, but I told myself I'm going to graduate." Vargas is the sixth of seven children and the first person in his family to graduate from high school. He attended Roberto Clemente High School, which has a dropout rate of around 70 percent, and is currently a student in the television program at Columbia College in Chicago. He is also employed as a studio supervisor for the Chicago Cable Access Corporation. In pursuing his interest in video, Vargas confronted the tension and dilemmas of moving outside his neighborhood. "At first when I went to college, I used to be ashamed to say where I came from, but as I get older I understand more. Your surroundings make you get an attitude where you don't think you can make it. But being a minority has made me a stronger person. And Community Television has given me an opportunity."

Golden Watkins, who also was honored for outstanding achievement this past fall, agrees that the opportunity provided by CTVN has made a significant difference in his life. "If I hadn't gotten involved with CTVN, I'd probably just have a no skills job. It's about a lot of dreams I have—being financially stable, earning a good living. As a little kid I lived in the projects, and it was terrifying." Watkins enrolled in a Neighborhood Program summer production workshop in 1984 that paid students a stipend with funds provided by the Mayor's Office of Employment and Training. Being able to earn some money, even a small amount, made it possible for Watkins to participate in the program. Both Watkins and Vargas have seen other students leave the program to look for paying jobs at times when there were no funds to pay stipends.

While many of their peers rarely leave their neighborhoods, both Vargas and Watkins have found themselves in unique situations as a result of their work with CTVN. Vargas worked on the tape, *Running with the Mayor*, a documentation of Harold Washington's 1983 campaign. He vividly recounts the experience: "It's something I won't forget. Washington started as an underdog, and then we saw the momentum growing. We'd get his schedule and start at eight in the morning and work all day. It was a challenge to stay one step ahead of him. We'd set up alongside all the professional crews. We'd also go places where no other media would go, like small community groups on the South Side. After a while he got to know who we were and would talk to us." Watkins' work with Video Services has led to an offer to produce a public service announcement for the Little City Foundation and the NBA Players Association. He also worked on a Video Services crew which taped a speech given by James Baldwin at a forum sponsored by Friends of the Chicago Public Library.

The latest addition to the CTVN family of programs is *Hard Cover*, a bi-weekly teen news program jointly produced by CTVN and Youth Communications, another Chicago-based service agency. CTVN provides a crew from its Neighborhood Program housed at Latino Youth, an alternative high school, and tapes the shows at the Cable Access studios. Each *Hard Cover* features a news segment and a panel discussion on various topics such as divorce and stepparents, homeless teens, and sexuality. As students drifted into the studio for a recent taping of *Hard Cover*, instructors Kevin Doyle and Sasha Sumner made crew assignments. There was an orderly chaos to the scene as the students bantered and teased, positioned cameras, ran cable, and connected mics. The topic for the day was teen parents, but today's guests—mother, father, and baby—were late.

As they waited, several students spoke emphatically of their alienation from the public school system. "Nobody teaches you anything there," stated Juan Plaza with exasperation. "Juarez is so big and crowded and the gangs are bad. You have no identity there." Jaime Soto picked up on the conversation: "There were so many people. I was nothing. At Latino Youth there is student involvement. Going there builds your self-esteem." CTVN asked Latino Youth to house one of its Neighborhood Programs specifically because of the school's politically conscious approach to educating city teens. The school program addresses issues of racism, sexism, and economic discrimination, as well as preparing students to obtain GED certificates, acquire job skills, or go on to college. The video course serves both as a means to teach job skills and as an outlet to explore issues and express ideas. Although Soto does not think he will work professionally in video, he hopes to be a teacher and use video with his students. "I like the activity, the involvement," he said. Josie Rubio, however, wants to be a camera operator for a television station. "This is the best experience I could get, working in the studio on *Hard Cover*," she reasoned. The guests for the program finally arrived and despite the fact that the baby grabbed the mics for most of the program, this group of teens had pulled it off. They had a 30-minute broadcast program ready to go.

In 1985 CTVN initiated Video Services, a series of advanced production seminars for graduates of the Neighborhood Program. Video Services functions as an income generating enterprise for CTVN that contracts to do tapes, pays students for their work on the projects, and refers students for paying jobs on industrial and commercial projects. The development of the students is easy to see as they make the jump from the Neighborhood Program to Video Services. The six students in a recent session of seminars had a more defined sense of what they wanted to do. When their instructor Judy Hoffman asked them what they personally wanted from their Video Services experience, they were quick to respond. One wanted to work on camera, another to develop her editing skills, a third was interested in focusing on scriptwriting.

Over a 10 to 12 week period the group will have sessions with camera people, sound recordists, editors, producers, and local news reporters. The professionals brought in for the seminars are Chicago-based film- and videomakers who work on features, documentaries, industrials, and commercials. The professionals also may work alongside the students producing a videotape contracted to Video Services, such as the recently released *AIDS: Questions and Answers*, commissioned by Cermak Hospital of Cook County Jail. Or they may hire Video Services trainees to freelance as crew for their own productions. This close contact with working professionals gives the students a real taste of the business and provides mentors for teens who have few connections for establishing such relationships.

"When I started CTVN, I wanted to make a difference," stated Zaccardi. "With some of our students who stay with us we know we are making an impact. But we've never had the funds to do much follow up. Every dollar we raise is needed to fund the programs." Even without statistically charting the ins and outs of the students who've participated in CTVN, it's clear that the organization is succeeding. It's dealing with the negative attitudes and lack of opportunities that confront inner city teens. CTVN's success and survival is a tribute to its staff, teachers, and students and a clear indictment of a society in which the words "equal opportunity" still have a hollow ring.

Community Television Network can be contacted at 1105 W. Lawrence Ave., Room 210, Chicago, IL 60640, 312/728-4030.

Barbara Tuss is coordinator of Instructional Media at the National College of Education in Evanston, Illinois.

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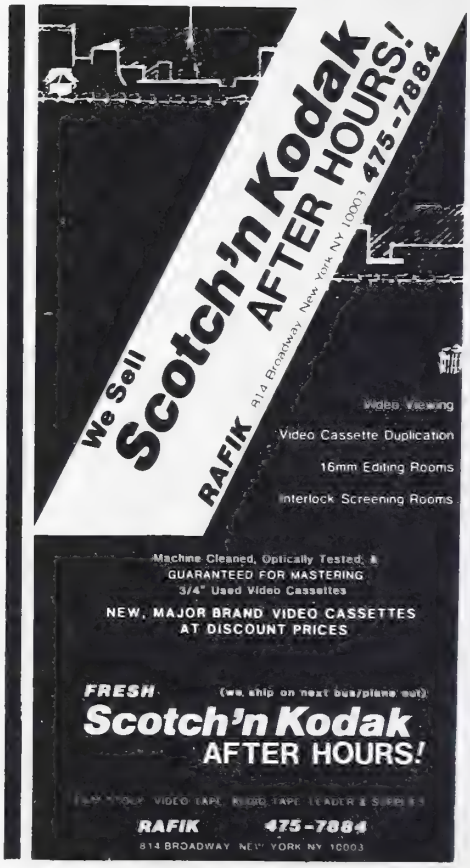
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BRITISH INTELLIGENCE: THE NATIONAL FESTIVAL OF INDEPENDENT VIDEO



Steve Hawley's *Trout Descending a Staircase* was one of the tapes programmed by the staff of *Independent Media*, a British video journal and sponsor of the National Independent Video Festival.

Courtesy the Media Centre

Mary Downes

Escape from London into England's green and pleasant "Silicon Valley," where mock Georgian and Victorian dwellings house upwardly mobile computer programmers. Travel into the woody heart of Berkshire where you will find Bracknell. Drive further still into the tranquil hills, and there you will discover Southill Park, once an aristocratic mansion, now a thriving arts center with a cinema, theater, exhibition space, and Media Centre. It was to these genteel surroundings that video artists, teachers, community workers, independent videomakers, scribes, and theorists made their annual pilgrimage last November to attend the Eighth National Festival of Independent Video, the most resilient event to emerge from the burgeoningBritish video culture of the late seventies, the era when the magazine *Independent Video* (now *Independent Media*), the festival's sponsor, was also conceived.

Brooding over proceedings this year was an automated video installation linking a camera to a computer that spewed out continuous prints of the gathering throng below. It was an interesting enough toy, with all the visual qualities of a quadratic equation, but, more significantly, it created an impression of high-tech artistry. Ever since George Orwell wrote *1984*, the TV screen has had a very special place in our imagination and fears. Lining the walls with images of them at a festival that also draws work from the grossly under-funded community sector may not be entirely appropriate, but it beats potted palms. Recorded for posterity as black and white computer printouts, the predominantly young, lefty audience with a specialized interest in the independent sector milled affably with humble ambassadors from the powers that be—the Arts Council of Great Britain, the British Film Institute, and Channel Four. Not so much a gathering of the rich and famous but more a serious reappraisal of work-in-progress by and for the workers, the festival got off to an interesting start.

The short roots of the festival reach back to the heydays of the Metropolitan Councils (recently abolished by Thatcher) when "alternative arts" flourished under radical new policies: video workshops proliferated, training projects evolved, and new technology flooded the markets. Just as young people learned how to make their own "scratch" tapes by copying and repeating TV images with their consumer-grade machines at home, so this growth was nurtured by television—Channel Four. Individuals or communities underserved by TV were given access to money, equipment, and air time. Black, women's, and community workshops were established to fulfill a broad mandate; training and production were integrated and educational activities were encouraged. Media literacy, seen as necessary to improving the representation of disenfranchised groups, became a principle of the era.

Established in optimism and struggling through unmitigated assaults upon the arts—when even the National Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Company are suffering—the Bracknell festival has survived on a farcically low budget from the British Film Institute and Channel Four. But to understand its programming one important distinction must be made. In British broadcasting, "independent" is used generically to describe anything non-BBC, from Putnam's Enigma Productions to small workshops operating on a shoestring. In the context of Bracknell, the term refers specifically to noncommercial work from the highly political grant-aided (state subsidized) sector—a broad constituency incorporating VHS tapes made by community groups, highly sophisticated documentaries and dramas, as well as formally innovative video art. Tapes may be commissioned or acquired by Channel Four, but the largest proportion is nonbroadcast work with a definite socio-political function. So, within this narrower definition of independent there is still a polarization between art-product and social-process. Where the two converge, the principles of the independent video movement are fulfilled, but it is the tension and contrasts between them which make the festival different from most showcase, talent-spotting, networking events.

If independent video is understood as a general description of anything noncommercial, little wonder that controversy has always plagued its programming. Exacerbated by financial difficulties, the problems become more acute. All selection policies previously employed for the festival—selections by individuals, by panels, according to themes—failed to placate the critical, elic-

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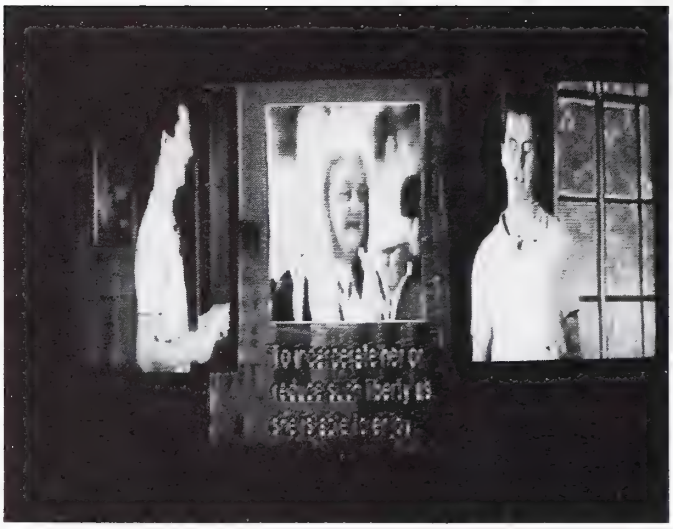
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The history of violence against the mentally handicapped is explored in Simon Robertshaw's impressionistic *Biometrika*, which was screened at the 1987 National Festival of Independent Video. Robertshaw won the student award at Bracknell the previous year.

Courtesy the Media Centre

iting charges of racism, sexism, or elitism. Last year, whispers of discontent grew into a loud chorus protesting the predominantly white, male selection of work on show. Programs ended in arguments, people stormed out, and the weekend deflated into pessimism.

This year, magazines with particular cultural or political demarcations were delegated to program the event. The black London paper *The Voice* and the feminist monthly *Spare Rib* ensured representation for blacks and women, while *New Society*, a social issue magazine, and *Performance*, an arts publication, covered community issues and video art respectively. Other permutations on these themes expanded the selection to a total of 11 programs staggered over the weekend. All representatives of magazines were curiously twinned with veterans of the independent video scene to make their selections. As a result, programming towed the sector line this year at the expense of controversy, but selections still reflected a healthy range of interests and stylistic preferences. Offensive tapes were notable for their absence as were the traditional rows, conspiratorial gatherings, protests at the bar, whining in the food queues, and complaining in the foyers. In retrospect, a little provocation may not have been a bad thing, if only to liven things up and allay accusations of complacency.

Put in a dark room and asked to guess which program was selected by which magazine, I would have difficulties. The *Spare Rib* and *New Society* selections clearly prioritized issues over production values. Typical of this dilemma was *The English Estate*, by the Community Arts Workshop, a tape about a housing estate in Rochdale produced by young, unskilled people with some professional help. Proving that a language unknown cannot be subverted, it was difficult to hear, see, or concentrate on an unstable, underedited tape, despite its laudable intent to expose the flip side of Thatcher's new affluence. Broadly speaking, this tape represents the community-process extreme of the festival. *The Voice* program, on the other hand, offered a compelling and varied selection with consistently high production standards. Both *Plutonium Blonde*, by Sandra Lahire, and Isaac Julien's *This Is Not an AIDS Advertisement* (a Sankofa workshop production) dealt with important social issues, using impressionistic, elegiac styles. Julien's sensual mix was particularly striking for its assertion of sexual desire over fear and guilt. An alternative to conventional AIDS hysteria, the tape presents an imaginative plea for compassion and sexual choice.

This year, no less than others, the festival exhibited an overriding preoccupation with film and television conventions—breaking with them, challenging them, parodying them. If the independent sector is united by any theme, it must be this. Particularly worrying, however, is that social concerns and authentic drama get buried beneath a welter of self-conscious interest in form and process. In this complex imitation game an alternative code of conventions is emerging, with an orthodoxy and hallowed critical sanctuary of its own. For all that, George Barber's *Taxi Driver II* and *Trout Descending a Staircase*, by Steve Hawley, toy with TV and fine art conventions using enough irreverent wit and invention to resist dependable formulas. And the quality of compassion infuses every delicately synchronized image in *Biometrika*, a deeply moving and disturbing tape by Simon Robertshaw, the winner of last year's Bracknell student award. Driven not by technical exhibitionism but by outrage, Robertshaw crafts an oblique moral narrative delineating the sad history of violence against the mentally handicapped. Erasing the fine line between legal sterilization and selective breeding, the tape takes recent court decision to their logical conclusions and establishes parallels—perhaps a little too bluntly at times—with the programs of the Nazis and the Eugenics Society. Beautifully impressionistic yet stridently political, this was easily the most interesting domestically-produced tape at the festival.

More engrossing by far, the international programs (the first to be included in the festival) from

Catalonia, France, and New York elicited some unsettling comparisons with our native offerings. Disproportionate concentration upon the visual in the foreign language tapes left striking impressions that are often difficult to translate or contrast with cultural counterparts. Absent were the documentaries and dramas which give shape and social delineation to a wash of beautiful imagery. For obvious reasons, the New York selection was more easily identifiable to British audiences. Describing pantomime-bitch Alexis Carrington as "a designer castrating machine," Joan Braderman, maker and unquestionable star of *Joan Does Dynasty*, presents a relentless diatribe on the tyranny and idiocy of the American soap. She translates the language of semiotics (not usually enjoyed for its hilarity) into cognoscenti-slang (e.g., "geriatric macho") and racy, spit-fire irony befitting the queen of camp herself. Performing her critique like an electronic circus act, Braderman incriminates the whole vicious circle from producers and stars to viewers and alternative commentators. Unlike most self-appointed provocateurs in the deconstruction business, she is entertaining, provocative, and utterly convincing. Another tape from the U.S. that concentrated on language and the interplay of preconceived notions and artifice, *Meet the People*, by Shelly Silver, provided a funny, touching, and restrained indictment of the American Dream and the folly of human fantasy.

In part, the last day of the festival, Sunday, was dedicated to talk, which like Sunday Mass tends to be long, boring, and repetitive but still a great ritual. Bemoaning the funding crisis, seeking definitive answers to ubiquitous questions (What is video art? Who controls the means of production?), or attacking easy scapegoats (TV companies, funding entities), words bounced around like boomerangs. If few conclusions were reached in these discussions, at least they consolidated dissatisfactions and general theoretical positions. Particularly amusing for its wet, liberal guilt was a paper on "Men and Video," written for a workshop of the same name, which flagellated the most self-loathing casualties of gender politics. Such absurdities aside, it's fair to report that most people left Southill Park this year with more questions than answers, but feeling optimistic, inspired, and determined.

Mary Downes writes features and television reviews for City Limits *in London, as well as video reviews for* Independent Media

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TEXT AND TUBE: LA SEMAINE INTERNATIONALE DE VIDEO

Tom Borrup

The first things an American might notice about Switzerland are that it's tidy and efficient. The trains—as well as everything else—run precisely on time, people speak two if not three languages, and a Big Mac costs 4.40 Swiss Francs. In November 1987 that's the equivalent of $3.26 U.S. It is within this milieu that the Seconde Semaine Internationale de Video (Second International Video Week) was held in Geneva, from November 16 to 21. The first such event in 1985 was equally as ambitious and impressive—and as equally unknown in "The New World."

The week-long festival was sponsored and hosted by the St. Gervais Maison des Jeunes et de la Culture (House of Youth and Culture) and took place in their fabulous 10-story multi-disciplinary arts center, which is supported by the city and houses several theaters, numerous areas for video, dance, photography programs, as well as eating, socializing, and other activities. The 200 people who came to screenings had the option of seeing every tape on monitors or projected. Spaces were comfortable and quiet, and the technical quality of the presentations was superb.

The 1987 Semaine was thematically structured to consider the topic "writing and video"—not writing *about* video, but as in "Is video a form of writing?" The week began with a two-day seminar led by Raymond Bellour and Philippe Dubois, who defined relationships between writing and video based on their research and on the videotapes of Jacques Louis Nyst and Gary Hill. In conjunction with the event, five installation works—by Gerd Belz, Silvie and Cherif Defraoui, Hill, Nyst, and Marcel Odenbach—opened for a two week run. Three European critics selected work that illustrates the week's theme, and retrospectives of works by Hill and Odenbach were mounted. In addition, the organizers produced a glossy, 150-page catalogue that included critical essays and descriptions of tapes.

The centerpiece of the Semaine, however, was a competition which drew nearly 400 entries from 20 countries. Organizers selected 10 percent of these for screening. Each artist whose work was shown received a fee of 100 Swiss Francs and review by a jury of five, chaired by Thomas Pfister, video and film curator at the Kunst Museum in Berne, which also included Andrée Duchaine from Montreal, Wolfgang Preikschat from West Germany, Georges Rey from Lyon, and Anna Ridley from London. Prizes of 1,500 SF went to Jeanne C. Finley (USA) for *Common Mistakes* (1986) and Daniel Reeves (USA) for *Ganapati—A Spirit in the Bush* (1986). One 4,000 SF prize went to a young artist, Dennis Dya (Canada), for *Oh Nothing* (1987), and the Grand Prix de la Ville de Geneve of 10,000 SF was awarded to Alexander Hahn (Switzerland) for *Viewers of Optics* (1987). Prize winning works are also purchased for the collection of the sponsoring St. Gervais Maison des Jeunes et de la Culture.

The Semaine compared favorably in scope and quality to any video festival in the U.S., with the exception that many of the North American works have previously been screened widely. The long list of supporters of the event—which included a number of government agencies, Sony-Geneve, Swissair, Gestronic S.A., and Migros, the giant Swiss food and banking cooperative—would make any U.S. arts organization jealous. And, given the scenic environment, financial support, well-orchestrated participation of curators, critics, and artists from Western Europe and French-speaking North America, the video week has a bright future.

The English-speaking attendees, however, would have fit into a standard-sized European car. Hopefully, for future Semaines (held every other year), some of the language boundaries will be overcome and the event will gain the visibility and participation it deserves from the English-speaking world.

Tom Borrup is the executive director of Intermedia Arts of Minnesota, a media arts center in Minneapolis.

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser. Listings do not constitute an endorsement & since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL: INDEPENDENT FILMMAKERS LOOKING AT OURSELVES, July, CA. Each summer this San Francisco fest showcases new U.S. ind. Jewish cinema along w/ selection of foreign films w/ Jewish themes. Now in 8th yr, it accepts dramatic, doc., experimental & animated films on Jewish history, culture & identity. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: April 15. Contact: Deborah Kaufman, Jewish Film Festival, 2600 Tenth St., Berkeley, CA 94710; (415) 548-0556.

SUFFOLK COUNTY FILM & VIDEO COMPETITION, June, NY. 5th annual comp for film/video in cats: arts & entertainment, sales & marketing, doc & student. Entries under 60 min., completed aft. Apr. 1980. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S 8, 3/4", 1/2". Fees (per cat.): $50 prof., $25 student. Deadline: May 1. Contact: Suffolk County Motion Picture & TV Committee, Dennison Bldg, 11th fl., Veteran's Memorial Hwy, Hauppauge. NY 11788; (516) 360-4800.

UNITED STATES STUDENT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, April 28-May 1, UT. College & university filmmakers are invited to participate in this 2nd annual fest held at University of Utah in Salt Lake City. Program incl. screenings of student works, film & video competition, seminars & workshops. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta, 8mm video. Cats: narrative, experimental & doc (film); narrative, experimental, doc & music (video). Awards incl. cash, trophies & film & video postproduction services. Entry fee: $20. Deadline: Mar. 15. Contact Nancy R. Green, festival coordinator, Film Front, 206 Performing Arts Bldg., University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT 84112; (801) 328-3646/521-8513.

FOREIGN

EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, August, Scotland. Celebrating 42nd yr, this 2-week noncompetitive fest, which last yr featured 155 feature, doc. & short films from 21 countries, is attended by large no. of filmmakers, critics & fest directors. Last yr's program incl. over 15 films by U.S. independent filmmakers, to whom fest is very receptive. Fest is part of larger int'l arts festival of exhibitions & performances. Press coverage is extensive & numerous workshops & conferences are part of the fest's texture. Films must have been completed in previous yr. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: mid-May. Contact: Jim Hickey, director, Edinburgh International Film Festival, Filmhouse, 88 Lothian Rd., Edinburgh EH3 9BZ, Scotland; tel: 031-228-6382, telex: 72165.

FESTIVAL OF FILM CONSECRATED TO ART, October, France. 2nd yr of fest highlighting films on contemporary plastic arts, sponsored by & held at Nat'l Museum of Modern Art. Sections incl. Above Competition (genesis of film on art), In Competition (the studio & the process of creation) & In Competition (confrontations). Films should have been completed in previous 7 yrs. Top prize: 30,000FF, 2nd prize: 15,000FF; remaining awards get honorable mention & offer of purchase. Shorts accepted. No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; preview on cassette. Deadline: June 15. Contact: Festival du Film sur l'Art, Les Ateliers, Cinema du Musée, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, 75191 Paris Cedex 04, France.

LOCARNO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, August 4-14, Switzerland. W/ stated commitment to & focus on new directors w/ 1st or 2nd features, this competitive feature film fest, now 41 yrs old, is meeting point for film-

makers from around world. Last yr's edition saw 8 first features out of 18 films in competition & many films received int'l premieres here. Many screenings held in the town's central Piazza Grande, where audiences can reach 6,000. Total program incl. over 100 films & 1,800 int'l guest (incl. 400 journalists), cinema & TV specialists attend. Past U.S. ind. prize winners have incl. Robert Gardner, Jim Jarmusch & Gregg Araki. Sections incl. int'l competition for fiction films by new directors & recently founded nat'l film industries; historical section designed to provide contributions to history of cinema, section dedicated to full-length fiction films produced for TV (w/ separate regulations, competition & int'l jury), info sections & film market. Films should be subtitled in French (although exceptions may be made). Competition open to eligible films (no educational, scientific or advertising) over 60 mins, completed in previous 12 mos; must be Swiss premieres that have not won prizes at other int'l festivals recognized by FIAPF. Preference given to world premieres & films not yet submitted to other major Euro int'l festivals. Prizes incl. Golden Leopard (Festival Grand Prize) & City of Locarno Grand Prize (10,000SF) to best film, Silver Leopard (2nd prize), Awards Committee Grand Prize & City of Locarno 2nd Prize (5,000SF) to 2nd best film; Bronze Leopards & cash prizes to 3rd & 4th place winners; honorable mention & technical prizes. Directors from other fests attend, incl. Berlin, Nyon, Hof, Mannheim, San Francisco, Sydney, Melbourne, Hong Kong & Istanbul. Market last yr screened over 50 films for 400 members of the Swiss industry. Formats: 35mm, 16mm.

This yr director David Streiff will visit New York at end of May & make selections at FIVF's offices. For info & appl, send SASE or contact Kathryn Bowser, FIVF Festival Bureau, 625 Broadway, 9th Fl., New York, NY 10012, (212) 473-3400. Deadline: May 15. Festival address: Festival Internazionale del Film Locarno, Via della Posta 6, CH-6600 Locarno, Switzerland; tel: 093-310232; telex: 846 565 FIFL.

TURIN INTERNATIONAL YOUTH FILM FESTIVAL. Oct. 13-21, Italy. New directors & established ind. filmmakers from N. America, Europe, Asia & Africa find meeting ground at this well-organized & stimulating northern Italian fest, dedicated to themes of youth & innovations in film vocabulary. Last yr, over 30 U.S. independent directors attended w/ their films & videos. Audiences, estimated at over 65,000, incl. enthusiastic local group of film buffs & invitees who attend as festival guests. Competitive feature & short film sections. The Open Space section (in which entrants must be under 30 yrs old) features video, super 8 & shorts out of competition; last yr over 350 programs screened in this section. Feature films in competition vie for 3 awards: best film, jury award & actor/actress; nightly screenings are SRO. Awards to best short & best feature. Certain selected films & videos shown in int'l forum sections. Retrospective section focuses on a particular national cinema each yr; last yr's was Soviet Cinema of the '60s; this yr will showcase Polish Cinema of the '60s. Fest provides round trip airfare, hotel & meals for all filmmakers in feature competitive section; others receive hospitality. Round-trip shipping charges covered. Each film has press conference. Post-screening discussions w/ filmmakers are lively. Entries should not have been released in Italy. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2" & Beta. Entry fee: $10 features, $5 shorts. Deadline: through July 10, but Michael Solomon, fest's NY rep, advises entrants to apply early. Contact: Michael Solomon, c/o FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., New York, NY 10012; (212) 473-3400 or (212) 475-2237.

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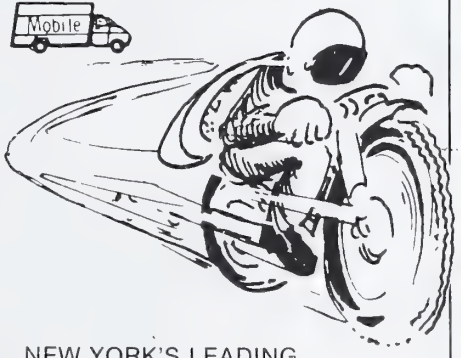
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In their three-part videotape *Consuming Hunger* Freke Vuijst and Ilan Ziv look at mega-media events—like Live Aid and Hands Across America—as the new instrument of televised charity.

Courtesy Maryknoll World

Renee Tajima

Filmmaker Sam Pollard is now in production with the film **A Portrait of Max**, a documentary on the legendary jazz percussionist/composer Max Roach. Unwilling to be limited as a musician in a specific musical category, Roach is an artist in constant search of new horizons. *A Portrait of Max* will illustrate his process as he works on a composition for a theatrical production of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer's Night Dream*, as a performer with Japanese traditional musicians, and as a featured soloist and composer with the Milan Symphony Orchestra. The film will capture the artist in various settings—at home, performing in a concert hall, and in the recording studio. And it will debunk the myth of the jazz musician as a "limited" artist—a totally, spontaneous, music-of-the-moment individual who works with no particular structure—which has long been used to minimize the rigor and significance of jazz. The film, produced by Dolores Elliott with executive producer St. Clair Bourne, is scheduled to be completed in July 1988. *A Portrait of Max:* The Center for the Study of Music on Society, 535 W. 110th St., New York, NY 10025; (212) 222-0438; (914) 664-2430.

Writer Studs Terkel called it "a damn good film." **Long Journey Home** is a documentary about migration and the dilemma of people torn between economic imperatives and their desire to maintain a home. Directed by Elizabeth Barret, with Herb E. Smith, the film is the second installment of the *History of Appalachia* film series, produced by the Kentucky-based media arts center Appalshop. In it, history is not espoused by experts and scholars, but told by ordinary people, "history-tellers," who are both current and former residents of the region. They include Anndrena Belcher, now a storyteller in Scott County, Virginia, who returned to the mountains after living most of her childhood in Chicago; Dr. William Turner, a university professor from a black coal mining family in Lynch, Kentucky; and the Hardins, a family returning to the mountains after 17 years in Baltimore. An overview of the social, cultural, and economic features of Appalachia that variously drives them away, holds them, or pulls them back emerges from their personal recollections. The first film in the *History of Appalachia* series is Herb E. Smith's *Strangers & Kin* (1984), a documentary on popular stereotypes of Appalachians. *Long Journey Home:* Appalshop, 306 Madison St., Whitesburg, KY 41858; (606) 633-0108.

The James Agee Film Project, makers of *Agee* and *The Electric Valley*, has just released a new, feature-length documentary. **Long Shadows** is a film about the legacy of the Civil War and its echoes of the conflict still reverberating in U.S. society. Director Ross Spears features a number of noted observers, including writers Robert Penn Warren, Studs Terkel, Tom Wicker, Robert Coles, former President Jimmy Carter, and historians C. Vann Woodward and John Hope Franklin. They speak about the central themes of the continuing economic impact of the war on North and South, the conflicts and stereotypes that still exist between the two regions, the enduring legends and heros from the war, its effect on U.S. military and foreign policy, and the legacy of race relations. As Robert Penn Warren points out, "The Civil War is, for the American imagination, the great single event of our history." *Long Shadows* also shows how the war has captured the popular imagination—in movies, literature, and song throughout the twentieth century. For theatrical screenings of *Long Shadows*, a special 3-D prologue is available, consisting of 3-D Civil War images taken from 125-year-old stereocards. *Long Shadows:* James Agee Film Project, 316 E. Main St., Johnson City, TN 37601; (615) 926-8637.

Last month, the Neighborhood Film/Video Project and the Folklife Center of Philadelphia's International House premiered a unique film and concert event by two Japanese American women artists. *Three Generations* deals with the personal histories of filmmaker Lise Yasui and musician/composer Sumi Tonooka in relation to their family's experiences during World War II. Yasui's 30-minute film *Family Gathering*, which features music by Tonooka, explores the experiences of her grandparents and the memories and silences of the era in her family history. Tonooka's *Out of the Silence* is a three-movement musical tone poem, or triptych, that blends traditional Japanese instrumentation—the shakuhachi and koto—with poetry and prose, jazz and contemporary music. Inspired by her relative's experiences during the 1940s, the individual sections are named for the successive Japanese American generations: Issei, Nisei, and Sansei. *Three Generations:* Neighborhood Film Project, 3701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 387-5125.

Phil Zwickler and Jane Lippman have released their new film **Rights and Reactions: Lesbian and Gay Rights on Trial** through Tapestry International in New York. The one-hour documentary looks at proponents and opponents of an controversial issue—legal and civil rights for lesbians and gay men—and records testimony and debates on the floor of the New York City Council during

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1986 hearings on the Gay Rights Bill. Tempers flare and strong rhetoric abounds as representatives pro and con explain their views, culminating in the Council vote that passed the 15-year-old bill into law. Film Forum in New York City has booked the film for a two-week run in June, and it was screened in the Panorama section at the Berlin International Film Festival. WNET, New York City's public TV station has also scheduled *Rights and Reactions* for an air date next fall. *Rights and Reactions:* Tapestry International, 924 Broadway, New York, NY 10010; (212) 677-6007.

If the Vietnam conflict was a "television war," starvation in Africa has become a "television famine," even though television belatedly acknowledged Ethiopia's 1984 and 1985 famine. In **Consuming Hunger**, Ilan Ziv and Freke Vuijst's three-part video series, the politics of these media images is subjected to an incisive analysis. *Part One: Getting the Story,* describes how news events from the third world are given low priority on western television. At first, the Ethiopian tragedy was considered "just another famine" and shoved to the back burner by U.S. broadcasters until the BBC broke the story. Yet, when the now infamous images of grieving mothers and their tiny, emaciated children were finally aired, it became the most moving news story of the decade. *Part Two: Shaping the Image* shows how tragedy can move quickly from television news to television spectacle—in the form of the Live Aid benefit, when these same pictures of starving children were exploited by fundraisers, movies of the week, and commercials. This type of mega-event is explored further in *Part Three: Selling the Feeling,* which takes a look at the Hands Across America campaign to raise money for homeless people. The series was produced by Maryknoll World Productions, and the three parts are also available separately. *Consuming Hunger:* Maryknoll World, Media Relations, Maryknoll, New York, 10545-0307; (800) 227-8523; (914) 941-7590, ext. 308.

The Educational Video Center, which trains inner city youth to make video documentaries, has earned top marks from festivals for its new production, **2371 Second Avenue: An East Harlem Story**. A group of five teenagers from New York City conceived, researched, shot, and edited the tape on the housing conditions endured by Millie Reyes, a member of the group and resident of East Harlem. The crew documented the decay of her building, interviewed other tenants and the superintendent, and followed them as they presented a petition to the landlord's office. Last November, the San Antonio Latino Cinefestival awarded *2371 Second Avenue* its Premier Mesquite Honorable Mention award. Later that month, EVC director Steve Goodman and videographer Miriam Hernandez were flown courtesy of JVC to the Tokyo Video festival, where the tape won the coveted President's Award, out of a pool of over 1,000 other entrants. *2371 Second Avenue:* EVC, 87 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 219-8129.

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TECHNICAL PUBLICATIONS: 16mm, 35mm camera manual (specify) $20; Audio Design (Mechanics of Sound Recording) $36; Optical Printer Prep. $20; Budget Form Set $10; Lens Test Glossary $20. Crosscountry Film Video, 724 Bloomfield St., Hoboken, NJ 07030; (201) 798-0949. Write for used equipment catalog.

FOR SALE: Sony M3A video camera, broadcast quality, 750 lines, 58 S/N, many auto features, w/ Canon 15X zoom lens, batteries, case. Condition like new. $6700. (718) 786-5001.

THE EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK: IBM or Commodore program creates logs, edit lists in SMPTE, or edge numbers. Calculates precise edge numbers for 16mm or 35mm neg conform to SMPTE allowing film edit from window dubs or off-line video edit. Call Arthur Boudine (914) 693-8198.

FOR SALE: JK optical printer, bought new 11/86, excellent condition, 2 lens, 16mm & S8mm gates, bolex rex 5 camera, JK computerized sequencer. Call Dawn (216) 961-9367, or 229-0968; leave message.

FOR SALE: FOR-A VTW 300 char. gen. B/W w/ color option. Ext. Sync or Genlock to video in. 16 pg. memory. Roll, Crawl & Normal transitions. Wipe capable. Flash, auto center, edit insert. W/ monochrome monitor & manual. Can be used as a stand-alone DSK (will overlay video in). $1000/b.o. Mark (212) 619-2017.

WANTED TO BUY: 35mm flatbed editing table, 2-plate on 4-plate. Call Patrick: (212) 620-3955.

FOR SALE: Arri IIc camera, 32mm, 50mm, 70mm Cooks, 2 mags, variable & crystal motors, flat base, matte box, batt, cases, $4,000 or b/o. 16 Angienieux zoom lenses, 12-120mm, 10-150mm. $800 each. 16mm upright Moviola, call Mark (212) 645-2057, (617) 522-8450.

NEED a production office space in Manhattan for an independent. Also want to *buy* 35mm & 16mm 8-plate flatbeds. Contact: Louis (212) 219-1049.

3/4" STARTER EDITING SYSTEM: Package includes Echo SE-2 switcher, Nova 500 TBC, Jaytex editor, CR-6600 player & CR-8200 recorder: $7,000. Will add Hitachi SK-80A camera with accessories at: $1,000. All equipment includes manuals except TBC. Call Chris (314) 231-0055.

FOR SALE: Ikegami HL83 w/ Canon J13xNB3, w/ road case $7500. Beaulieu 5008-S Super 8 sound w/ 6-66 Schneider, w/ case $625. Nizo 2056-Super 8 sound w/ 7-56 schneider, w/ case $500. Angenieux 9.5mm-95mm zoom lens w/ CA-I mount $1000. Call Victor (212) 732-4587, lv. message.

FOR SALE: Sennheiser (5) K3U, (2) ME80, (4) MKE 10-3, (1) ME40: $1000. AKGD900 shot gun mike: $250. (2) EV mics: $200. Nagra ATN: $200. Lamb mixer PLM422 w/ LP10-24A: $250. Tascam model 5 w/ anvil case: $600. Shure M67: $50. Crown VFX2 crossover: $225. Call Victor (212) 732-4587.

FOR SALE: Pkg 1) 16mm 6-plate tilt-top Moviola, Sync, Moviescope, Ampli, rewinds, 10-split reels, bins, Rivas & Catozzo splicers $3,000. Pkg 2) 3-12 volt Cine 60 belts, Lisand Arri Pod & H Hat, Pentax Spot $750. All items personally owned. Near perfect misc. items included in pkgs. Call Donna (914) 358-7485.

FOR SALE: Video camera Sony Trinitron DXC 1640, w/ case $550; portable video cassette recorder Sony Beta I SLO 340, w/ BP-60 battery & soft case $400; portable video cassette recorder Sony SL 3000 w/ BP-60 battery & soft case $300; Sony battery charger/AC unit AC-300c $50. Make an offer! (212) 222-2879.

FOR SALE: ACL (French) 2 400' mags, 9.5-57 w/ Chrosziel, Arri & Nikon adapters, custom leather barney w/ onboard battery rig, 3 batt, charger, Eclair 8-75fps motor, Halliburton, filters, access. $5000. Steve (212) 677-2075.

FOR RENT: 6-plate Steenbeck available in your home or studio. $300/mo. Negotiable. Call Roberta (212) 874-7255.

Freelancers

DIRECTOR/CINEMATOGRAPHER: 10th year specializing in unusual in-camera effects for complete 16mm music videos. Shoot, cut, transfer. Cost effective true artistic filmmaking. Arriflex, Ang., Sachtler, Lowel, car. 40 min. from NYC. Call for reel & rates. Gerard Yates (914) 764-8558.

PHOTOS BY LES SIMON: 35mm still photographer available for location scouting, set shoots, publicity shoots or what have you. Experienced, reasonable. Box 2287, New York, NY 10009; (212) 724-2800 (service).

VIDEO PRODUCTION: Experienced crew with complete package, including Sony CCD Camera. BVU 110 with Time Code, Lowel DPs, Omnis & Totas. Full audio & many other extras. High quality VHS & 3/4" duplication also available. Call (212) 319-5970.

AC WITH AATON available for your independent production. Incredibly low prices. Call (914) 234-7564.

SOUND PERSON WITH NAGRA would like to work on your production. My rate is extremely low. Call (914) 234-7564.

3/4" VIDEO PRODUCTION: Broadcast quality 3-tube Sony camera, deck, tripod, mikes, lights, background material, a/c van, w/ experienced cameraperson, very reasonable rates. Smart Video (212) 877-5545.

DIRECTOR/CAMERAPERSON available with Ikegami 3/4" or Betacam packages—crew & additional equipment on request. 10 yrs documentary, broadcast & industrial experience. Rates negotiable. For reel & information, call Richard (212) 247-2471.

GAFFER: 18' grip truck with loading room for camerapersons. Lighting packages: 200W to 2K, generators. Call for information & rental prices. J. Anthony Productions (516) 294-1038.

CAMERAMAN WITH OWN EQUIPMENT avail.: 16SR, 35BL. Superspeed lenses, Z31 video camera, sound equipment, lighting van. Passport. Certified scuba diver. Speak French, a little Spanish. Call (212) 929-7728.

ORIGINAL MUSIC: Award-winning composer/producer available for interesting & quality projects. Film or video. Experienced professional. Complete production services from composing to finished soundtrack. Rates depend on project. (916) 769-5734, Dennis Rivellino.

PRODUCTION MANAGER w/ casting experience & an office in the heart of the film business is now available for your project. Features, industrials, commericals, music videos—no job too big or small. Call IFL (212) 315-3670.

CINEMATOGRAPHER with Aaton 16mm/Super 16mm, lighting & sound package. Low-budget feature experience. Interested in dramatic features & shorts. Call for reel & rates. Jonathan (212) 925-9723.

WORD PROCESSING: Letter quality for your script, proposal.... Experienced; also writing & editing. Call Jean (718) 788-7156.

MEDIA CONSULTANT: Market your project successfully. Production-related assistance incl. fundraising, packaging, script/project doctoring, marketing strategies. Proposals & pitches for gov't grants, foundations, corps, individuals, studios, nets, int'l markets. Power resumés. Barbara Sirota Media. (212) 740-2272.

EXP. SCRIPT SUPERVISOR available to work on features, shorts & commercials. Professionalism a must. Grai Rice: (212) 242-1601.

STILLS PHOTOGRAPHER available for production & publicity stills. Reliable, flexible & very reasonable. Call Warner at (212) 228-7670.

RESEARCHER WITH WRITING SKILLS available for feature & documentary projects. Reasonable rates, refs. available. Call (212) 477-6828.

INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER/VIDEOGRAPHER/SOUNDMAN with equipment available for short or long-term projects. Crew available. Cameras, lights, and/or audio. PCM digital sound recording. Call Arthur Boudine, NY area (914) 693-8198.

VVV PRODUCTIONS: We care about your project, treating it as if it were one of ours. To us professionalism does not mean lack of passion or commitment. Try our experienced crew & location pkg (Sony DXC 3000, VO 6800, tripod, mikes, lights, etc.). Call us today. Because we care. (212) 662-1342.

FEATURE CREW WANTED: Low budget 35mm feature needs prod. manager & location managers, AD, camera op. (w/ ltg. exp.), POC, cook, etc. Pay moderate, but this is a film where quality matters. Resumé: Stone Canyon Films, #10, 32 W. 31 St., NY, NY 10001.

price. Wolf Mountain Studios (212) 431-8748.

OFFLINE SONY 3/4" EDITING ROOM: Comfortable environment, near downtown Brooklyn. With or without editor. Reasonable rates, discounts for AIVF members & students. (718) 852-2643.

THE EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK: IBM or Commodore program creates logs, edit lists in SMPTE or edge numbers. Calculates precise edge numbers for 16mm or 35mm neg conform to SMPTE allowing film edit from window dubs or off-line video edit. Call Arthur Boudine (914) 693-8198.

OFF-LINE VIDEOTAPE EDITOR/PRODUCTION COORDINATOR available for wide range of projects—from documentary to industrial; narrative to experimental. Good rates. Please call Sally Kaplan (212) 226-4676.

BROADCAST QUALITY TITLE LIBRARY: Sharp, attractive titles at less than 25 cents each. Enhance your productions with over 180 titles for Weddings, Sports, Holidays & more. For free information, call: Capricorn Video Productions, Nat. 1-(800) 237-8400 Ext. 19, FL 1-(800) 282-1469 Ext. 19.

Postproduction

BOB BRODSKY & TONI TREADWAY: Super 8 & 8mm film-to-video mastering with scene-by-scene color correction to 3/4", I" & Betacam. By appointment only. Call (617) 666-3372.

SOUND TRANSFERS: 16/35mm, all speeds & formats, including multi-track & time code. Full FX Library. Evening & weekend service available, convenient downtown location. Low rates. Downtown Transfer (212) 255-8698.

NEGATIVE MATCHING: Complete 35mm & 16mm service. Discount available to AIVF members & students. Contact Wood Lam (212) 633-0815.

3/4" & 3/4"-SP BROADCAST QUALITY EDITING with A/B roll, $95/hr including operator. Free special FX for AIVF members, incl. slo-mo, freezes, four-quad, graphics. Call HDTV Enterprises, Inc., near Lincoln Center. (212) 874-4524.

3/4" EDITING: Sony 5850 system with Chyron VP2 plus, TBC, scopes, SEG, digital effects & audio sweetening. Low prices, great editors. Also: highest quality video duplication known to man to & from 3/4" to VHS. Call (212) 319-5970.

16MM EDITING ROOM: Fully equipped with 6-plate Steenbeck & 24-hr access. Secure, convenient Upper West Side location (across street from Lincoln Center). Reasonable rates. Call Jeff Wisotsky Productions (212) 971-5637.

16MM FLATBEDS FOR RENT: 6-plate flatbeds for rent in your workspace or fully equipped downtown editing room with 24-hour access. Cheapest rates in NYC for independent filmmakers. Call Philmaster Productions (212) 873-4470.

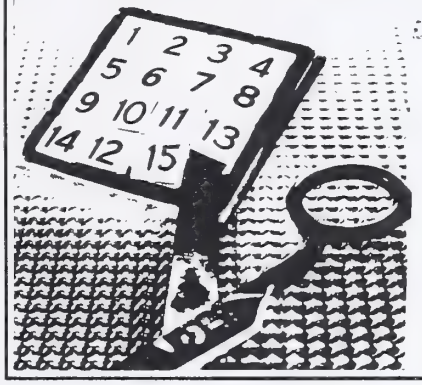
EDITORS: Downtown Transfer offers Digital Sampling. Create room tone or ambience tracks from existing tapes by sampling brief pauses between words or quiet instant before "Action." Manipulate sound effects by stretching, shrinking, looping, changing pitch, tempo. Full FX library. Downtown Transfer (212) 255-8698.

3/4" VIDEO EDITING. 1/2" dubbing. $10/hr, you do it. $25/hr, we do it. Rm 440/Sony decks. West Village. Robby or Doron. (212) 620-9157.

3/4" OFF-LINE editing complete w/ Sony BVU 800 decks, Sony BVE 800 controller. Broadcast quality at industrial rates. Downtown. 24-hr access. Low prices. Martin Smith Productions (212) 925-6541.

SUPER VHS PRE & POSTPRODUCTION STUDIO: Panasonic 200 CLE Camera, AG 7400 portable deck & AG 7500 off-line editing system with character generator. Superior quality (400+ lines of resolution) at an affordable

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6 to 9 p.m.

May Auditorium of the New School for Social Research
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New York, NY

Make your tax-deductible contribution ($10 students, $25. or more, all others) payable to International Film Seminars, Inc. and mail to Flaherty Gala, Deirdre Boyle, Chair 88 Bleecker St., #2-S New York NY 10012. For further information call 212/475-1955

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NOTICES

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. **The Independent** reserves the right to edit for length.

Deadlines for **Notices** will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date, e.g., April 8 for the June issue. Send notices to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Conferences • Workshops

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF COMMUNITY BROADCASTERS: annual training conference & business meeting, Apr. 14-18 at Crowne Plaza Holiday Inn, in suburban Washington, DC. Over 250 trainers & business mtg delegates representing public radio, incl. mgrs, chief engineers & program directors. Contact: NFCB, Conference Staff, 1314 14th St., NW, Washington, DC 20005.

CALIFORNIA LAWYERS FOR THE ARTS: Copyright clinics will be held on the 2nd & 4th Saturdays of each month during 1988 (except Feb. 13, May 28, Nov. 26 & Dec. 24). Drop-in consultations of approx. 20 min. from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at CLA Library, Bldg. C, Rm. 255 (2nd fl.), Fort Mason Center, San Francisco, CA, $10 for members; $20 nonmembers. CLA, Fort Mason Center, Bldg. C, San Francisco, CA 94123; (415) 775-7200.

10TH ANNUAL CHINSEGUT CONFERENCE on the moving image for film, video & performance, Apr. 13-17 at the U. of South Florida, Tampa & the Tides Beach & Bath Club on Florida's Gulf Coast. Sponsored by Atlantic Prods, Fine Arts Council of Florida, Univ. Film & Video Assn & USF Student Gov't & Fine Arts Dept. Write: Jill Johnston, Art Dept., USF, Tampa, Fl 33620; (813) 974-2360.

INPUT '88: Annual forum for exchange of program ideas among producers, programmers & broadcasting organizations will take place May 1-8 in Philadelphia. Contact: INPUT '88 Secretariat, Frances McElroy, WHYY, Inc., 150 N. 6th St., Philadelphia, PA 19106; (215) 351-1200.

NAMAC CONFERENCE: The 1988 Nat'l Alliance of Media Arts Centers' annual conference will be held in conjunction w/ 12th Atlanta Film & Video Festival, May 18-21 at the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA. Main theme: Media Arts Exhibition, w/ AFVF screenings held each evening. Topics incl. marketing/publicity/audience development; info services; criticism/program notes/aesthetics of media arts; artists' concerns; exhibition technology/hardware; intermedia arts. Contact: NAMAC, c/o IMAGE Film/Video Ctr., 75 Bennett St., NW, Ste. M-1, Atlanta, GA 30309; (404) 352-4225.

PROFESSIONAL VIDEO TRAINING PROGRAM: Borough of Manhattan Community College has expanded course offerings in program that retrains film professionals to work in video. Offers new on-line A/B edit suite, video graphics lab & seminars in managing small businesses. All courses & materials free to students. Contact: Sandra Poster; (212) 618-1573 or Emily Armstrong, (212) 618-1387/88, BMCC, 199 Chambers St., New York, NY 10007; (212) 618-1605.

PIONEERING DOCUMENTARIANS will discuss the documentary form at 2-day seminar presented by Global Village in cooperation w/ Media Studies Program at New School. Held at May Theater, 66 5th Ave., Parsons Bldg., Apr. 9 & 10, 10-5 pm. Cost: $150. Preregistration or AIVF members, $125. Contact: Global Village; (212) 966-7526.

ITS/NATPE 1ST INT'L TELEPRODUCTION CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION will be held June 25-28 at Los Angeles Convention/Exhibition Ctr. Contact: Susan Stanco, ITS Dir. of Conference Marketing, Int'l Teleproduction Society, 990 6th Ave., Ste. 21E, New York, NY 10018; (212) 629-3266.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS & THE 1ST AMENDMENT will be held April 10-12 outside Washington, DC, at the National 4-H Center in Chevy Chase, MD. The conference will focus on protecting the public interest with an emphasis on coalition building and practical solutions. Speakers include Ralph Nader, Lawrence Sapadin, DeeDee Halleck, Henry Geller, Andrew Schwartzman, Michael Myerson, and others. $90 registration fee, $40 students. Make checks payable to Telecommunications Consumer Coalition and mail to: 105 Madison Ave., 9th fl., NY, NY 10016, Attn: Andrew Blau. For further info: (617) 897-8066.

FLAHERTY GALA party and benefit screening will be held May 7, 6-9 pm, at New School of Social Research's May Auditorium, 66 5th Ave, NYC. Seating is limited. For reservations, send check w/ tax-deductible contribution of $25, $50 or $100—$10 for students. (Contributions accepted at the door, but seating not guaranteed.) Make checks payable to: International Film Seminars, Inc. Mail to: Flaherty Gala, Deirdre Boyle, Chair, 88 Bleecker St., #2-S, NY, NY 10012; (212) 475-1955.

Films • Tapes Wanted

HOME VIDEOS WANTED for national TV show. Looking for funny or offbeat product, from music videos to mini-movies. Prizes awarded to selected pieces. All will be returned. Send tapes to: Kevin Berg, c/o Lynch/Biller Prods., 6430 Sunset Blvd., #901, Hollywood, CA 90028; (213) 469-7166.

SHORT FILM SUBMISSIONS WANTED: MTV is now developing weekly comedy series that incorporates funny, bizarre, or "strange" short films. Optimum length: 1:30-3:00. Longer submissions screened w/ understanding that they may be edited to fit this segment length. Tapes can be submitted on 1/2" or 3/4", but must have 3/4" masters for air. Please send submissions to: MTV Comedy Films, 1775 Broadway, 10th fl., New York, NY 10019.

2ND NEW YORK CITY LESBIAN & GAY Experimental Film Festival is seeking work in 16mm & Super 8 to be exhibited in Sept. 1988. Submissions between Apr. 1 & July 15. Send prints or video transfers to: Jim Hubbard, 503 Broadway, Rm. 503, New York City 10012. Or call (212) 505-1758. Women & minorities especially encouraged to apply.

CINCINNATI ARTISTS GROUP EFFORT is looking for video art work to be included in a series of 3 TV shows for broadcast distribution. Pieces should be about 5 min. or less & will be paid honoriaria of up to $200/min. for selected work. Deadline for entries: July 1. Send entries w/ SAS return mailer to: CAGE, 344 W. 4th St., Cincinnati, OH 45202.

MEDIAMIX is currently accepting original video, film & computer work for cable TV series *New Gallery*. Fictional narrative, non-narrative, experimental & abstract work accepted. All work must be submitted on 3/4" video (VHS/Beta formats conditionally accepted). No piece may exceed 23 min. Contact producers in writing or by phone: Mediamix, New Gallery Producers, Box 1623, New Brunswick, NJ 08903; (201) 249-1375.

ZIEMAN PRODUCTIONS creates music videos using stock footage & recut films. Seek nonexclusive rights for film footage to use in videos, incl. quality dramatic, dance, performance, industrials w/ dramatic or illustrative scenes & other films & their outtakes w/ footage suitable for rock, country, blues, pop & show-tune music videos. Pay competitive rates for footage used & will supply a 1" master, if usable. Contact: John Hession, Zieman Prods., 2 Bleecker St., New York, NY 10012; (212) 529-1254.

THE MEDIA SHOW, Channel 4 magazine-format program dealing with film, TV, press, advertising & print, seeks films/tapes. Please send videos or proposals for work-in-progress to: Kate Newington, Wall to Wall Television Ltd., 1 Richmond Mews, Off Nead St., London W1V 5AG, England.

Opportunities • Gigs

GRANTS MANAGER: Film News Now Foundation seeks well-organized, meticulous person dedicated to minority & social issue film & video to administer fiscal sponsorship program & in-house grants management. Part-time position. Send resumé to Film News, 335 W. 38th St., 5th fl., New York, NY 10018.

MEDIA INTERNSHIPS AVAILABLE. Women Make Movies, nonprofit feminist media distr. organization, now seeking interns or work/study students for work as distrib., promotion & program assts. Contact: Celia Chong, WMM, 225 Lafayette St., Rm. 211, New York, NY 10012; (212) 925-0606.

VIDEO/FILM ARTIST: Several positions anticipated in Visual Arts Dept. of UC/San Diego. Seeks video/filmmaker who has made a distinctive & original contribution to the field. Must have broad knowledge & work experience. Substantial exhibition record & college teaching exp. required. Part-time or possibly full-time position(s) to replace faculty on leave for the 1988-89 academic yr. Write: David Antin, chair, Visual Arts (B-027), Univ. of Calif., San Diego, La Jolla, CA 92093.

VIDEO ARTIST/INSTRUCTOR wanted to teach intermediate & advanced production & related courses beginning Fall 1988, and to design access plan for new facilities. Masters degree required, MFA preferred. Two years

college-level teaching exp. preferred. Three-quarters time position, permanent contract. Salary negotiable, exc. benefits & tuition waiver. Send resumé by April 21 to: Dir. of Personnel, Massachusetts College of Art, 621 Huntington Ave., Boston, MA 02115.

VIDEO DEPT. SUPERVISOR sought who has technical, production & administrative experience and is interested in working with people with developmental disabilities. Send resumé to: Rena Zaid, Little City Foundation, 4801 W. Peterson, Chicago, IL 60646.

SOCIETY FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC EDUCATION is soliciting proposals for panels & presentations for its 1989 conference "Media and Society," to be held in Rochester, NY, Mar. 16-19, 1989. Submissions should be 1 page or less & be sent before Aug. 1 to: SPE 89 Rochester Conference, Box 564, Rochester, NY 14603.

Publications • Software

RADIUS/RESOURCES FOR LOCAL ARTS: new newsletter published by Rural Arts Services in cooperation w/ Calif. Assembly of Local Arts Agencies. Subs are $15/yr, but will be provided free in 1988 as a result of a grant from the CA Arts Council. (Paid subs still invited.) Contact: RADIUS, Rural Arts Services, Box 1547, Mendocino, CA 95460.

INT'L DICTIONARY OF FILMS & FILMMAKERS: Vol. 5 *Title Index* now available from St. James Press. Incls. in-depth info on world's most significant films & filmakers, past & present. Complete 5 vol. set is $250, or $60 each. Contact: St. James Press, 425 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611; (800) 345-0392; (312) 329-0806.

CALIFORNIA LAWYERS FOR THE ARTS: Books on legal business for nonprofits & the arts available from CLA. Incl. publications on nonprofit corporations, artists' marketing manual, income tax, museums, contracts, dispute resolution, independent publishing, copyright & insurance. Contact: CLA, Fort Mason Center, Bldg. C, San Francisco, CA 94123.

FRAMEWORK 34: British film journal now published by Sankofa Film & Video Unit. Current issue incl. articles on Soviet cultural politics, Chilean cinema in exile, 3rd cinema & Arab cinema. Subscriptions incl. 2 free back issues: $15 for individuals, $25 for institutions. Contact: Framework, 40A, Topsfield Parade, London, N8 8QA, UK.

ART OF FILING: Tax workbook for visual, performing & literary artists & other self-employed professionals now available from Resources & Counseling, United Arts. Cost: $12.95/ea. (MN residents add 6% tax), plus $1.50 postage & handling. Make check payable to: United Arts, R&C/UA, 411 Landmark Ctr., 75 W. 5th St., St. Paul, MN 55102; (612) 292-4381.

TEXAS FILM/TAPE PROFESSIONALS 1987 directory is now available free of charge to individuals and companies involved with the Texas film/tape production industry. Contact: Nicki Roberts, Texas Assoc. of Film/Tape Professionals, 3023 Routh St., Suite 208, Dallas, TX 75201; (214) 871-2701.

Resources • Funds

WOMEN IN FILM: 4th annual Film Finishing Fund round provides small completion grants to video/filmmakers who have demonstrated advanced & innovative skills consistent w/ goals of WIF. For guidelines & appls send SASE to: Film Finishing Fund, Women in Film, 6464 Sunset Blvd., Ste. 660, Los Angeles, CA 90028.

THE MEDIA BUREAU provides $500 grants to New York state artists for postproduction of video & radio projects. Submit appl., budget form & rough-cut of project on 3/4" videotape or audio cassette (for radio projects). Deadline: May 1. Also has funds available for presentation of video & audiotapes in New York State, incl. screenings, installations & performances of multimedia works incorporating substantial amounts of video or radio, workshops, short residencies, tech. asst & equip. access relating directly to these projects. Appls reviewed continuously. Contact: Media Bureau, The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St., New York, NY 10011; (212) 255-5793.

VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP: Now accepting proposals for 1988-89 Artist-in-Residency program. Photographers, video artists, book artists & printers invited to submit proposals for 1-mo. residencies at Visual Studies Workshop. Residents receive $1000 honorarium, living space & access to facilities. Deadline: Apr. 15. Contact: AIR Program, Visual Studies Workshop, 31 Prince St., Rochester, NY 14607; (716) 442-8676.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING'S Open Solicitation deadline: Apr. 22. For appls, contact: CPB, 1111 16th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 955-5100.

INTERMEDIA ARTS MINNESOTA: Grants to Interdisciplinary Artists program funded by NEA & Rockefeller Fnd. awards $2500 to $7000 for works involving 2 or more art forms, to artists from MN, IA, ND, SD & WI. Contact: Al Kosters, Intermedia Arts, 425 Ontario St., SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414; (612) 627-4444.

ARTS MIDWEST/NEA regional Visual Arts Fellowship Award Program provides 20 awards of $3,500 ea. to prof. visual artists living & working in IL, IN, IA, MI, MN, ND, OH, SD & WI, who have not received NEA fellowships. Contact: Arts Midwest, 528 Hennepin Ave., Ste. 310, Minneapolis, MN 55403; (612) 341-0755.

MIDATLANTIC ARTS FOUNDATION: Visual Arts Residency Program appl. deadline: July 15. Contact: Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation, 11 E. Chase St., Ste. 1A, Baltimore, MD 21202; (301) 539-6656.

NEW YORK COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES: Proposals for project support deadline: June 1. Contact: NYCH, 198 Broadway, 10th fl., New York, NY 10038; (212) 233-1131.

REAL ART WAYS Audio & Video Access Center available to ind. producers. Multi-track recording studio & 3/4" shooting & editing video facility. Subsidies offered for portion of user cost. Consultation, production & technical assistance also provided. Contact: Marty Fegy, technical director or Victor Velt, video curator, Real Art Ways, 94 Allyn St., Hartford, CT, 06103-1402.

RISCA DEADLINES: Rhode Island State Council on the Arts project support appl. deadline: Mar. 1; individual fellowships, Mar. 15; general operating support, Apr. 15. Contact: RISCA, 312 Wickenden St., Providence, RI 02903.

SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION Grant deadlines: May 15 & Aug. 15 for individuals & orgs. Contact: SC Arts Comm., 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201; (803) 734-8696.

FILM/VIDEO PROJECT SPONSORSHIP: Collective for Living Cinema serves as nonprofit sponsorship organization for selected film/video projects. For information & guidelines contact: Jack Walsh, Collective for Living Cinema, 41 White St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 925-3926.

FAF GRANTS for funding of new work by Bay Area film/videomakers in 3 cats: short, personal works ($3000 per grant), project development ($1000 per grant) & completion/distribution ($2500 per grant). Appl. deadline: May 23. For guidelines & forms, call: (415) 552-8760.

Trims & Glitches

KUDOS to Karil Daniels, whose documentary *Water Baby: Experiences of Water Birth* keeps on bringing in awards. The latest is 1st prize in Educational Division of Video Medium Festival, sponsored by the Geoffrey Taber Gallery in Columbus, OH.

CONGRATS to AIVF members who have been awarded Writers Guild of America East Foundation Fellowships: Pablo Figueroa, Hsienli Chia, Gordon Hitchins & Sandy Jaffee.

ADRIENNE MANCIA, curator of the Department of Film at the Museum of Modern Art, has received the revered Croce della Republica, the Order of the Republic of Italy. Congratulations!

KUDOS to CPB Open Solicitation finalists William Jersey of Quest Productions for *Earl Warren: His Life and Legacy* and Michael Park for *The Democrats' Dilemma: A Quarter Century of Change*.

IT'S OSCAR TIME & we congratulate AIVF members who received Academy Award nominations: John Junkerman (*Hellfire: A Journey from Hiroshima*), Robert Stone (*Radio Bikini*), and Deborah Dickson (*Frances Steloff: Memoirs of a Bookseller*).

RENEE TAJIMA & CHRISTINE CHOY'S new film *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* opened the New Directors/New Films series at the Museum of Modern Art in March. AIVF and *The Independent*, in particular, congratulate our tireless associate editor and dauntless board member on their premiere.

MOVING?
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SUCCESS STORY: INDEPENDENTS' BOOTH AT BERLIN FEST

For the second year, AIVF and the New York Foundation for the Arts joined in a collaborative effort to represent U.S. independent film- and videomakers in the market of the 1988 Berlin Film Festival, held from February 12 to 23. An expanded consortium of 35 national media organizations—including exhibitors, distributors, trade associations, publishers, and production companies—co-sponsored the market booth and distributed literature about their programs.

The 37 feature and short films selected for the Panorama and Forum of Young Cinema sections of the festival, as well as the work represented in a video sidebar, found a home in the "American Independents" booth. In addition, as a major new component to this annual endeavor, 18 feature films were represented exclusively in the market. Lynda Hansen and Lisa Overton of NYFA, Kathryn Bowser of AIVF, and a team of volunteers coordinated and attended the market screenings, answered hundreds of questions, and advised filmmakers on all aspects of the festival and the promotion of their films. Ulla Rapp of the Munich Film Festival served as the booth's German liaison, and the corps of workers who ensured the continual smooth functioning of the booth included Karen Arikian of the Independent Feature Project, filmmakers Anne Landesman, Donata Beckers, and Barbara Baruch, and distributor Emily Russo.

With over 7,000 people accredited to the festival, the booth served as an invaluable nerve center for attending filmmakers who otherwise may have found it a daunting task to make contacts with the hundreds of journalists, distributors, buyers, and festival reps in attendance. For market filmmakers who weren't present, it guaranteed that their work would be represented. The impressive list of films represented at the booth generated plenty of excitement and attention. Negotiations on several sales were begun or concluded by the festival's end.

Participating consortium members included the American Film Institute, the American Film and Video Association, American Masters, American Playhouse, Bravo, Carnegie Screening Room/Bleecker Street Cinemas, the Chicago International Film Festival, CUNY-TV, Cornell Cinema/Central New York Programmers Group, Film Arts Foundation, FilmFest DC, Film Forum, Film in the Cities, the Film Society of Lincoln Center, First Run Features, Fox/Lorber Associates, Frameline/San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, Hallwalls, the Independent Feature Project, the Independent Feature Project/West, International Documentary Association, Margaret Mead Film Festival, the Museum of Modern Art Department of Film, the Neighborhood Film and Video Project, the New York Center for Visual History, the New York Council for the Humanities, the New York Governor's Office for Motion Picture and Television Development, New York Women in Film, Northwest Film and Video Center, Tapestry Productions, Third World Newsreel, UCLA Film and Television Archive, and WNET Channel 13/Independent Focus.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, an information clearinghouse, and a grant making program. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, foundations and organizations: The New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the Governor's Office of Motion Picture and Television Development, the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, the Consolidated Edison Company of New York, the Benton Foundation, the Funding Exchange, and the dozens of organizations that advertise in *The Independent*.

LOCARNO FEST TO PRE-SCREEN AT FIVF

David Streiff, the director of the Locarno International Film Festival in Switzerland, will visit FIVF at the end of May to select films for the forty-first edition of the festival. First or second feature films by new directors qualify. For information and applications, please contact Kathryn Bowser, FIVF Festival Bureau, 625 Broadway, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10012; (212) 473-3400. See this month's "In Brief" for details on entry requirements.

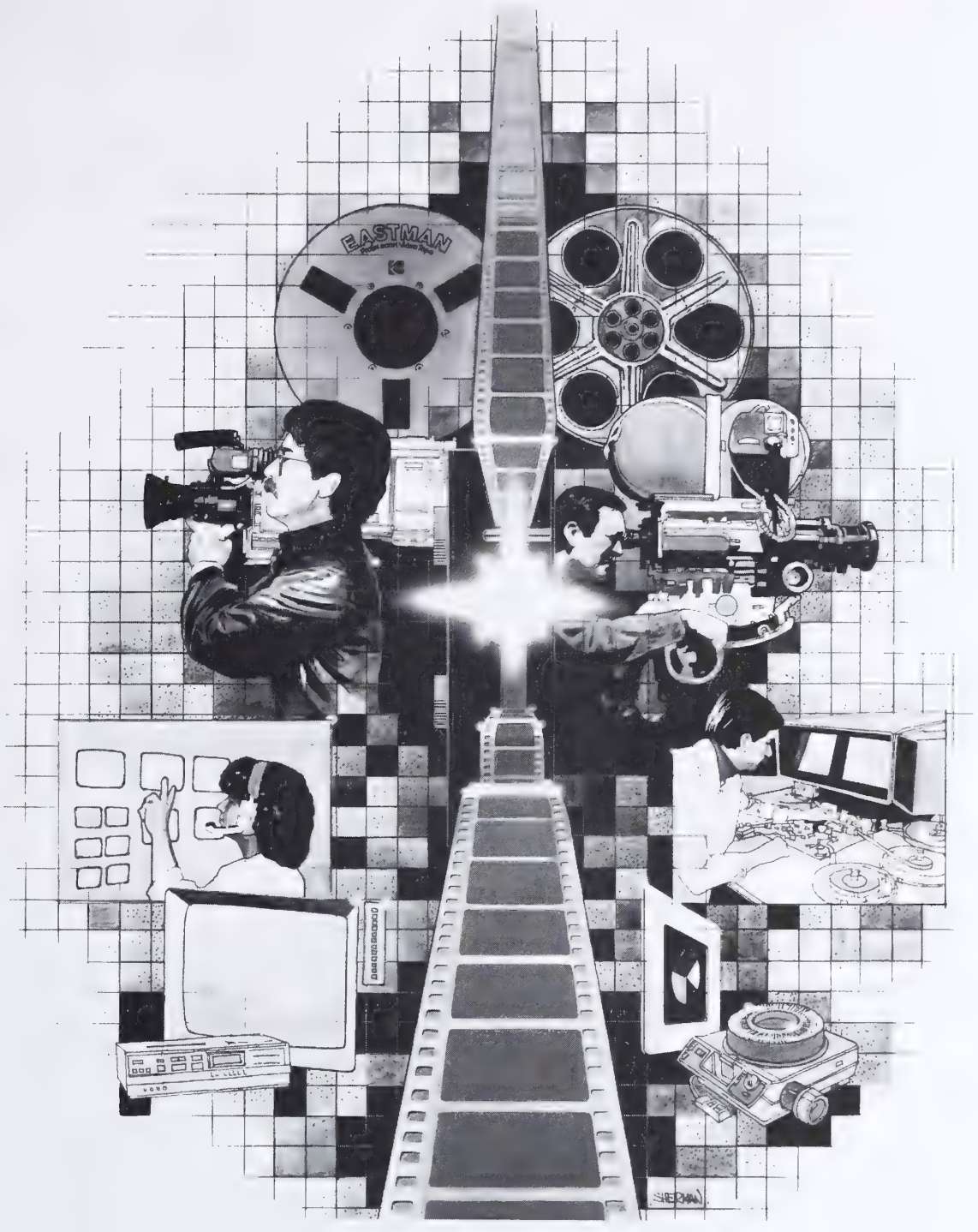
ADVANCING ADVOCACY

The Emergency Tax Equity Fund, established by AIVF to support efforts to convince Congress to exempt independent film- and videomakers from the uniform capitalization rules of the 1986 Tax Reform Act [see "Media Clips" and "Legal Briefs," March 1988], has been launched by contributions from:

Adair & Armstrong, Leandra Adishian, Diana Agosta, Ann Alter, Karen Arikian, Steven Ascher, Miranda Beeson, Zvia Bird, Neil Burger, Peter Bull, Rebecca Coffey, Janet Cole, Constance Coleman, Scott Counsell, Margaret Carr Daniel, Susan Delson, Bryan Dew, Howard Dratch, Nena Eskridge, Eric Farber, Nicole Fauteaux, Judy Fieth, Deirdre Fishel, Margaret Mary Foss, Mark Gilliland, Cary Goldweber, Deborah Gordon, George Gregory, Peter Griesinger, Grania Gurievitch, Mary Guzzy, Julie Gustafson, Joyce Harris, Joshua Harrison, Sorrel Doris Hays, Arthur Hermansen, Lisa Hsia, Sharon Kahn, Michelle Marder Kamhi, Larry Kay, Manfred Kirchheimer, Larry Kirschner, Joseph Kleinman, Diane Kolyer, Barbara Kristaponis, Jill Kroesen, Ruth Lefkowitz, Regge Life, Ronald Light, Charles Lyman, Loring McAlpin, Walter McGrady, Allen Moore, Eric Muzzy, Robert Panzarella, Muriel Peters, Alan Powell, Yvonne Rainer, Terri Randall, John Raugalis, Robin Reidy, Robert Richter, Lillian Rivlin, Allan Rostoker, Moe Schwartz, Deborah Shaffer, Roger Sherman, Jeffrey Skoller, Robert Spencer, Pat Stone, Robert Stone, George C. Stoney, Catherine Warnow, Jane Weinstock, J. Weitzman, Dean Wetherell, Elizabeth Wilde.

AIVF thanks all those who have donated to the Fund so far and encourages all other members to send a check or money order, made out to Emergency Tax Equity Fund, to AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012. All donations are deductible as business expenses.

Additional contributions to AIVF's Emergency Legislative Fund, which is being used to advocate a National Independent Program Service for public television, have been received from Doug Block, Ronald Light, and Heather Dew Oaksen. AIVF continues to work with the National Coalition of Independent Public Television Producers toward the establishment of NIPS, as well as congressional guarantees for the five public broadcasting minority programming consortia, and welcomes more contributions, addressed to: AIVF Emergency Legislative Fund, AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.



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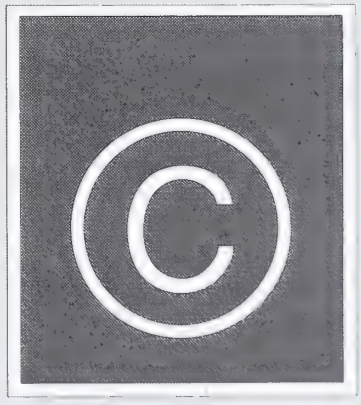
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COVER: With every new invention of video technology, artists invent new ways to make that technology interactive. The latest high-tech video frontier is videodisc, and since the mid-eighties artists have adapted the machinery developed for interactive military and industrial applications for less lethal or commercial projects. In "Electronic Backtalk: The Art of Interactive Video," Lucinda Furlong traces the short history of artists' involvement with various concepts and uses of interactive video. One of these, Roberta Friedman and Grahame Weinbren's *The Erl King*, allows the audience to construct an experience of the work from various recorded components, including soprano Elisabeth Arnold's rendition of a *lied* by Shubert based on Goethe's *Der Erlkoenig*. Photo courtesy artists.

FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY
THE INDEPENDENT

BOSTON ACCESS DECENTRALIZES AND EXPANDS

The Boston Community Access and Programming Foundation has announced expansion plans for its public access facilities. The foundation is the city's nonprofit access organization, which operates the two Boston Neighborhood Network Channels under franchise holder Cablevision of Boston. According to the foundation's general manager, Herbert Jessup, the expansion will involve all three existing access facilities, as well as the construction of a fourth studio. The full studio facility in Roxbury will be able to add another staff person and additional operating hours, while the space of production facilities in Jamaica Plain and the South End will be expanded. The Foundation also runs a mobile, three-camera production van.

But Tim Wright, coordinator at the Jamaica Plain-based Southwest Corridor Access Center, calls these changes a function of decentralization, not expansion. Last year, pro-decentralization community producers and access staffers squared off with Jessup and some foundation board members, who advocated centralization of the system. Under the latter proposal, the South End and Jamaica Plain centers would have been closed. The dispute was resolved when a task force composed of producers, staff, and board members recommended a decentralization process that would mandate the construction of a fourth studio. Wright says that, in light of the foundation's limited budget, they agreed to cutbacks at the two existing centers as a trade-off.

The real expansion story in Boston access is the dramatic improvements in hardware. Jessup spent over $100,000 last year on capital acquisitions, including 10 half-inch Panasonic AG155 and AG160 camcorders and three new industrial grade half-inch editing systems with VHS mastering capability. The new equipment has lifted Boston access from its nadir in 1985 when, according to Wright, Cablevision abrogated its access contribution of five percent of gross revenues and paid out less than one percent instead. The resulting budget constraints took a toll on the quality of access in the city. The Asian American Resource workshop, which had been producing on a regular basis since 1983, stopped using the facilities in 1986 after repeated frustrations with deteriorating equipment. With the cut, Cablevision was able to negotiate a controversial contract modification to two percent. "Although community producers felt it was a sell out," says Wright, "it did double the de facto payments."

The next step in the decentralization or expansion plan is the construction of the fourth access center. The Boston neighborhoods of Allston, Hyde Park, and the South End are being considered, and Jessup expects a final decision in April.

RENEE TAJIMA

GAY FILM TOMORROW

Plans to develop a nonprofit umbrella organization for gay and lesbian media producers were announced last month. The new group, Gay Film Today, will serve as a central support structure, providing administrative and production assistance in the form of fundraising, consultations in proposal writing, grant administration, exhibition planning, and production support. They also announced plans to publish *Gay Film Today: The International Journal of Gay Film*.

"We got the inspiration to start Gay Film Today after the Experimental Gay Film Festival in New York City last September," recalls John Lewis, the group's spokesperson. According to Lewis, he and six others—Susan Horowitz, Jim Hubbard, Candida Scott Piel, Greta Schiller, Andrea Weiss, and Phil Zwickler—formed a development committee to set up the organization after they concurred that the gay and lesbian media community lacked an organized source of information. "We realized that we all had to reinvent the wheel repeatedly because there was no mechanism that connected us to people who had gone ahead," says Lewis.

In the year ahead, Gay Film Today's development committee will concentrate on setting administrative, fiscal, and fundraising policies. "We want to establish ourselves within the gay community first and to build slowly towards organizational stability, rather than risk any capital with hasty decisions," explains Lewis. Current expenses are being covered by private funds from the existing members, but the group has already applied to the New York State Council on the Arts for funds to establish services to artists.

A priority for the organization is to assist gay and lesbian media producers with their projects and to build audiences. The group plans to offer production assistance—staff and space—as well as help with public relations—flyers, mailings, and other methods for cultivating audiences—for selected projects that qualify according to financial need and viability. Complete guidelines do not exist yet, but the first project to receive production, exhibition, and promotion support will be *Tiny & Ruby: Hell Divin' Women*, a film by Gay Film Today development committee mem-

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bers Schiller and Weiss. Other services—consultations, library resources, mailing lists—will be available to the general public.

Lewis adds that another focus for the group will be emerging gay and lesbian artists. "We want to seek out emerging artists and students and provide them with enough support so that they will not succumb to the lure of mainstream, commercial media." Gay Film Today also intends to restore original video material from the Queer Blue Light video collection from the 1970s. There is no staff in place, and the group is seeking volunteers and office space. For more information, contact Gay Film Today, Box 20207, New York, New York 10029; (212) 864-7131.

QUYNH THAI

MIDWESTERN MOMENTUM

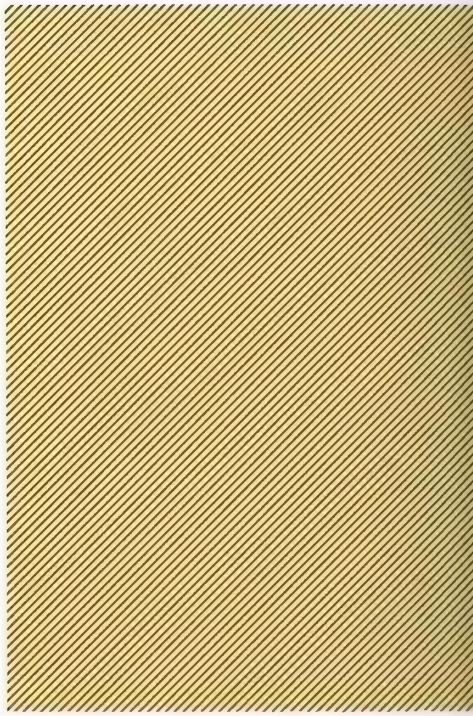
Despite its claim to regional diversity, independent filmmaking and all related activities have always been heavily concentrated in urban centers on the West and East Coasts. But last March, a new foothold was established in the heartland by a group of film and video producers in Kansas City, Missouri: the Midstates Independent Film Society. According to executive director Janice Woolery, the new organization fills a vacuum left by the closing of the City Movie Center, a nonprofit theater that screened local and regional works. MIFS will try to forge a new rallying point for independent film through a newsletter, a film and video festival, and a fiscal sponsorship program for independent producers.

In the past, many of the area's most successful filmmakers have left Kansas City. "There isn't a lot of support for independent producers here," says Woolery; "I can't afford to go anywhere else. But there's a lot of talent and story ideas in Kansas City. Films *can* be done here." Little in the way of local funding exists for independents and the majority survive on commercial production work. MIFS itself is operating without funding, and is looking for investors and membership fees for financing.

The organization hopes that chapters will form in other midstate areas, which they define as Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin. Also included are Illinois, Minnesota, and Texas, where active independent filmmaking activities already exist. The group decided to include these states in order to provide a range of experience for the planned festival. "Our region's filmmakers are working but are rarely seen," Woolery points out, "and putting them side by side with more recognized filmmakers will give them that opportunity to be seen." MIFS can be contacted at Box 32893, Kansas City, Missouri 64111; (816) 931-2665.

RT


THE INDEPENDENT



8MM VIDEO COOKING AT THE KITCHEN

A new resource for 8mm video producers has just been launched by the New York-based Kitchen multi-art center and the 8mm Video Council, a nonprofit trade association representing video hardware, software, blank tape, accessory suppliers, retailers, and other related businesses. For the first time, emerging videomakers will have access to free hardware through the Video 8 Equipment Loan Program "to explore the 8mm video technology in creative ways," according to the Kitchen's press release.

The five-month loan program will begin on May 1, with recipients selected by the Kitchen from applications solicited from around the country. The program is open to all styles, including documentary, animation, narrative, advocacy, and other experimental projects. Awardees will be able to use 8mm video packages loaned by the manufacturers in the council, and their completed works will be considered for exhibition in the Kitchen's Video Viewing Room season for 1988-89.

The program was initiated last year by the Kitchen and the 8mm Video Council, which already runs an equipment loan program to universities. "We wanted to direct this program to artists because we believe it is a viable, affordable format for them," says Council spokesperson Michelle Marin. "Artists will push the format beyond a standard, routine understanding. We recognize that anything in mass culture usually has its start with artists, and we're looking for them to explore and expand the 8mm video technology." For information on the next program deadline, contact the Kitchen, 512 West 19th Street, New York, New York 10011; (212) 255-5793.

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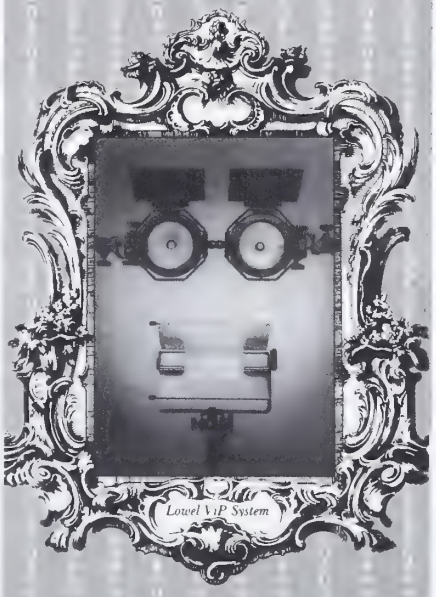
JAY LEYDA, 1910-1988

Jay Leyda, film scholar, teacher, and filmmaker, died in New York on February 15 at age 78. Since the 1930s Leyda acted as an important link between the Soviet Union, China, and the U.S. film community, particularly through his translations of Sergei Eisenstein's writings, such as *Film Sense* (1942) and *Film Form* (1949), and through his own books and articles on Soviet and Chinese cinema. Leyda's seminal works—*Kino: A History of the Russian and Soviet Film* (1960), *Eisenstein at Work* (1980), with Zina Voynow, and *Dianying: Electric Shadows: An Account of Films and the Film Audience in China* (1972)—remain influential texts for film scholars and students today. His other major works include *Films Beget Films: A Study of the Compilation Film* (1964), *The Melville Log*, *Sergei Rachmaninoff: A Lifetime in Music*, and *The Years and Hours of Emily Dickinson*.

Leyda began his career in 1929 as a photogra-

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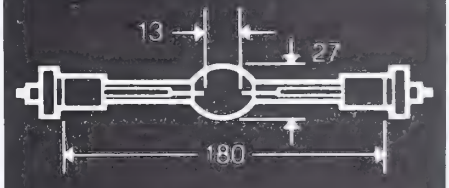
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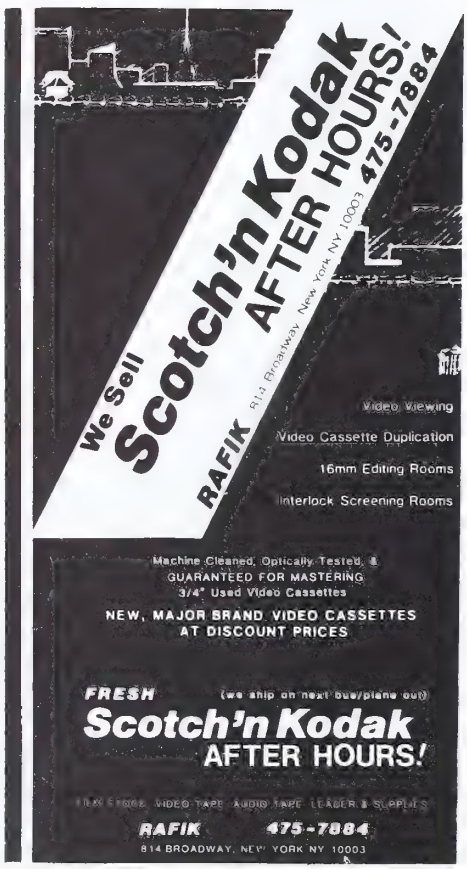
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pher and darkroom assistant to Ralph Steiner. Within the next few years both became active in the New York branch of the Film and Photo League. Leyda's first film, the short *A Bronx Morning* (1932), paved the way for him to travel to the Soviet Union on a film fellowship. He remained there from 1933 to 1936, enrolling in the Moscow State Film School and becoming the only U.S. citizen to study under Eisenstein. Leyda became Eisenstein's assistant director on *Bezhim Meadow*, which was banned and destroyed during the Second World War.

During those years in Moscow Leyda stayed in touch with Steiner and other members of the FPL, conveying information and ideas back and forth between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. Eisenstein's classroom exercises, which Leyda had described to his colleagues, were introduced into FPL workshops. On the fifteenth anniversary of Soviet cinema in 1935, Leyda edited a special Russian issue of *New Theater*, a publication aligned with the FPL, which included translations of Eisenstein's writings.

Upon his return to the U.S., Leyda was hired as assistant film curator by the newly formed Department of Film at the Museum of Modern Art. He composed program notes for MoMA's film screenings and published occasional articles. During this time he was also active in Frontier Films, a progressive production company spawned by the loosely knit Nykino film collective, itself an offshoot of the Film and Photo League. Leyda's involvement with Frontier Films centered around three films. He assisted with the musical arrangement for their first work, *Heart of Spain* (1937), on the Spanish Civil War. That same year Leyda co-edited *China Strikes Back*, an influential and widely seen film which contained the first film footage of Mao Zedong's Eighth Route forces in Yenan that had been smuggled into the U.S. Leyda also co-edited *People of Cumberland* (1938), a film on the unionization of the Cumberland Mountain people by a local labor college.

Leyda subsequently helped form the Association of Documentary Film Producers in 1939 and

Jay Leyda, eminent film historian and Pinewood Professor at New York University, died last February at age 78.

Photo: Robert Haller

served as the chair of its education committee. Both the Association and Frontier Films were effectively dissolved by the Second World War and the accompanying changes in political climate and film production opportunities. During the war years Leyda worked in Hollywood on such films as *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* and *Mission to Moscow*.

Subsequently Leyda occupied posts at the Staatliches Filmarchive, East Berlin, the Chinese Film Archive, Peking, the British Film Institute, the Cinémathèque Française, Yale University, and York University in Toronto. From 1973 until his death, he was Pinewood Professor of Cinema Studies at New York University.

PATRICIA THOMSON

HUGH ROBERTSON, 1932-1988

Hugh Robertson, one of the first Black independent filmmakers to establish himself as a major feature film editor and director, died last January of cancer in the Wadsworth Memorial Center in Los Angeles. He was 55 years old. Fame in Robertson's career came in 1969 when John Schlesinger hired him to edit *Midnight Cowboy*, for which he was nominated for both an American Academy Award and a British Academy Award. He succeeded in obtaining the British Oscar.

Born in Brooklyn of Jamaican parents, Robertson first learned the craft of film editing and television production in the Signal Corps during World War Two. He later studied at the New Institute for Motion Pictures and Television in New York, the University of Paris (Sorbonne), and with Elia Kazan at the Negro Actors Guild.

Robertson's rare gift of creative workmanship in *Midnight Cowboy* clearly established his talent as a film editor. But, since being a film director had always been his ambition, he actively sought opportunities to actualize this ability. In 1971, Robertson caught the attention of MGM studios, which agreed to let him direct his own film upon agreement to edit *Shaft*, the mystery-detective thriller with the Oscar award-winning score by Isaac Hayes, directed by Gordon Parks Sr. During the seventies, when Black independent filmmakers such as Parks, Melvin Van Peebles, and Bill Gunn were gaining access to a film industry heretofore prohibited to Blacks, Robertson made his Hollywood directorial debut in 1972 with *Melinda*.

Robertson was inducted into the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame in 1982 and served as a guest instructor for the Independent Filmmakers Workshop sponsored by the organization. The workshop was a training ground for young independent filmmakers seeking careers in film and television.

Robertson's last feature film *Obeah*, a horror story of the star-crossed desire of two young lovers set against the background of voodoo mysticism in the Caribbean, was completed shortly before his untimely passing and premiered at the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame in October 1987.

JOHN WILLIAMS

John Williams, a scholar of independent filmmaking, is a contributer to Cinemaction, Discourse, *and other publications.*

SEQUELS

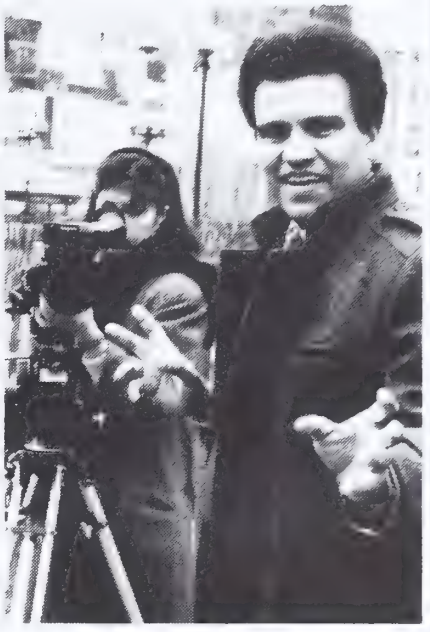
At its March 15 meeting the board of directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting adopted a Statement of Principles of Editorial and Artistic Integrity, intended to remove the board from any direct supervision of the selection process of CPB's Program Fund. This action addresses concerns raised in 1986, when then board member Richard Brookhiser proposed a **content analysis of public affairs programs** aired by the Public Broadcasting Service ["Board in Flames: Conservatives Take Control at CPB," January/February 1987]. Brookhiser's plan was widely criticized as an attempt to restrict CPB grants to controversial programs and cater to right-wing critics of CPB and PBS, such as Accuracy in Media. After considerable debate the proposal was rejected, and Brookhiser subsequently declined renomination to the board.

The **Independent Feature Project**, based in New York City, has appointed Peggy Hubble as executive director. Prior to assuming her post at IFP, Hubble worked for PBS, most currently acting as director of Development and National Relations.

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A DIFFERENT DRUMMER: CHICAGO'S "LABOR BEAT"



Virginia Keller interviews United Farm Workers organizer Frank Ortiz for *Labor Beat*.
Photo: Steve Dalber

Amy Killinger

Over the years, broadcast television has portrayed America's workers as comically myopic characters whose concerns run from keeping their bellies bloated to fantasizing get-rich-quick schemes. We have been treated to the opportunism of Ralph Kramden, the rueful machismo and racism of Archie Bunker, and the dizzy-headed high-jinks of Laverne and Shirley. This image of working people has been abetted by network news, which reluctantly casts the spotlight on the U.S. labor force. Strikers make good visuals on the evening news, but while management is allowed to prattle, workers' views often go unheard in this age of Reagan-endorsed union busting.

But labor has started to fight back on cable TV. More and more union and labor groups around the country have begun to take advantage of their local public access channels. Eloise Payne of the Washington D.C.-based Labor Institute of Public Affairs estimates that 45 locals and labor councils around the country are producing and renting tapes to show on public access channels. In addition, increasing numbers of independent public access producers are creating programming about labor. An independently produced labor series has aired on public access channels in Grand Rapids since 1983, and labor programs can also be seen in San Francisco, Pittsburgh, and Nashville.

One of the most interesting public access labor series being produced is a relative newcomer. In November 1986 Chicago's Committee for Labor Access began programming *Labor Beat* on the local public access channel. Described by one of the producers as a series for working people, the half-hour weekly program gave the city its first taste of labor-oriented television. Since then, *Labor Beat* was chosen as one of four finalists for the Hometown U.S.A. Award, the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers' annual prize for the best public access cable TV series, and won an award at the International Network of Progressive Film and Video Festival.

Labor Beat has also garnered acclaim from unions and independent producers. Laurie Townsend, who covers labor television for *Labor Notes*, a publication of the United Auto Workers, has found positive reactions to *Labor Beat* among union members. Townsend says the show brings the labor community together by regularly covering issues that usually go unexplored. Gordon Quinn, former board member of the Chicago Access Corporation and an independent producer of social and labor issue films, has called the series "the best thing on cable access." He believes, "They are building an audience better than anybody else in Chicago."

The Committee for Labor Access was formed in 1983 by Larry Duncan and four other independent producers to monitor hearings on Chicago's cable franchise. The group's specific purpose was to lobby for a labor channel. When that did not materialize, the group decided to develop a public access labor series. In the fall of 1986, when Chicago's public access facility began operating, *Labor Beat* was among the first shows produced. Since then, diversity has become the series' hallmark, both in topic and style. In part, this is due to the diversity of the 12 committee members, whose backgrounds range from public school teaching to theater to filmmaking. Some are union members. Some are veteran public access producers. Some committee members, like Julie Johnson, a secretary and former public school teacher, never picked up a video camera until they joined the group.

The committee chooses its subjects by vote. "There's a lot of exchange going on because we do have a lot of disagreement," Johnson says. Once shows are agreed upon, two board members act as producers for the program, reporting back to the committee as the project progresses. The series has covered several local strikes and union conferences. But it also has touched on topics such as unions dealing with the homeless and the economic effects of Star Wars military production on workers. An interview with a Filipino union leader, a speech by Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega in Chicago, and a lecture by journalist Alexander Cockburn on big business and the media have been included in the series.

However, *Labor Beat* does not offer these programs in a vacuum. "What we try to do, besides just presenting a document of the situation, is to present an analysis of it too," explains Bob Hercules, one of the program's producers. Often producers either write their own conclusions concerning the events they cover or ask outside commentators to voice their views—without the

typical mediation of a reporter or interviewer. In a program on the recent NBC strike, *Labor Beat* producers included Jesse Jackson's analysis of the conflict after he spent a day on the picket line. Sometimes atypical experts—workers—perform the analysis. A tape on organizing college clerical workers included a panel discussion with secretaries and an interview with one who works at a local college where organizing efforts had failed. "We're conscious of letting people say it in their own words," says Keller. As Johnson points out, if you let the workers talk, the program becomes theirs.

The program's scope is also due, in part, to the committee's independence from any specific union. This leaves *Labor Beat* free to cover a range of labor-related issues, including controversies within the labor movement. The committee recently decided to do a program on the dispute between the Chicago Board of Education and several trade unions over the administration of a local trade school. The Board had accused the unions of discriminating against minority students. "We realize there are a lot of differences of opinion in labor," says Duncan. He describes the committee as labor advocates, but adds, "We don't have a political line outside of supporting the labor movement." As producer Ginny Keller puts it, "We just don't back any union because they are a union. If the Teamsters came to us, that would be a hard question."

Yet *Labor Beat* producers have made outreach programs for unions on how to use public access and have often worked with labor organizations on the series. The tape on part-time college teachers organizing was screened for the subjects in order to elicit their suggestions. The Committee also collaborated with Kinfolk, a local rank and file group at Oscar Mayer Foods, on a tape on crises in the meat packing industry. According to Alan Rausch of Kinfolk, that tape became a means of communication for the local, which comprises over 100 meat packing factories in the Chicago area. "It allowed us to organize inside the plant from the outside," says Rausch. When the National Association of Broadcast and Electronic Technicians struck NBC, the Chicago local called *Labor Beat* and asked them to cover it. As is often the case, *Labor Beat* was one of the few camera crews at the strike. The only other was an NBC crew of strikebreakers. Ironically, NBC later called *Labor Beat* and asked to air their footage because what the temporary network crew had shot was unusable.

The spectrum of labor issues presented by *Labor Beat* is also calculated to attract non-union viewers to the program. "We're trying to reach as wide an audience as possible," Hercules states. But he and the other producers realize that to attract a wide audience the programs must make labor visually exciting. "To get a message out in this society you have to be as lively as possible," Hercules notes. The committee's producers have used a mixture of techniques to make the show appealing, including computer graphics, live footage, and dramatic reconstructions. Graphics, as well as stock footage taken from network TV, are intermixed with studio shots to keep a fast pace. In the series' first program, *Labor and the Media*, the camera opens on a studio shot of a man reading from a script. The camera then quickly cuts to scenes, such as the hurly burly of Wall Street, that illustrate the voiceover which describes the evolution of the negative image of labor in the popular media.

Live footage of strikes and labor rallies sometimes make up whole programs. Or, as with the computer graphics, live footage is used to break up the monotony of studio shots. *The Road to Haymarket*, which gives an account of the eight-hour day movement, combines dramatic reconstructions of the famous riot with a montage of historical photographs. The docudrama opens with current shots of the Chicago factory building where the riot took place, then moves to a darkly-lit scene in which actors portray workers secretly listening to a union agitator. Dramatic skits have also been used in *Labor Relations: The New Fall Season*, an analytical satire of the drug testing mania, and *The Image Maker*, which portrays the antics of a union-busting lawyer. However, because almost all of the programs are produced for a few hundred dollars or less, productions are sometimes limited to studio shots. For *The Fantasy and Reality of Star Wars*, producer Ginny Keller shot a studio discussion with scientists and technicians working in the defense industry.

Because the committee has no way to assess how big the local viewing audience for *Labor Beat* is, they have begun to promote and distribute their programs to other public access channels. Cable systems in St. Louis, Evanston, and Austin began cablecasting the program last fall, while systems in West Hollywood and La Jolla are considering ordering the series. But the cost of distribution raised the expenses for *Labor Beat*, which were previously out of the producers' pockets. To cover the extra costs the committee has begun to look for outside donations. They have raised money at screenings of their tapes and asked union groups for funding. Earlier this year, they received about $200 from a showing of *The Road to Haymarket*. "Given the shows don't cost much, that goes a long way," Hercules says.

As coordinator of the labor program in the next *Deep Dish* series that will be cablecast via satellite in the spring—*Is This Working? Labor in the Eighties*—the committee hopes to expand the network of labor television producers across the country. "We'd like to see other people out there doing the same thing," Duncan says. "We're not trying to get a corner on the market."

Amy Killinger is reporter for the Burlington Free Press *in Vermont.*

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BRIGHT MOMENTS



Black Journal executive editor Lou Potter (left) and executive producer William Greaves at a press conference following the series' first successful season.

All photos courtesy author

St. Clair Bourne

This spring will mark my twentieth year as an independent producer/director working with both film and video. When I was invited to a symposium at the Hawaiian International Film Festival and asked to prepare a paper about the African-American image in media, I began to think about my own experiences, the social conditions that existed when I started and, in fact, how both images and conditions have changed—and not changed—since I started making films.

Let me begin by stating the obvious: images in U.S. media—not just images of Blacks, but all images—are highly influenced by the political conditions of the times. Moreover, Black images have not been and still are not controlled by Black producers, and, therefore, these images were created to serve the psychic purposes of those that do control them. Because Europeans originally brought Africans here as slaves to provide service and labor and nothing more, the representations of these slaves were used to rationalize and reinforce their intended place in society. Thus, racial stereotypes came to symbolize the mental restructuring of the African presence in America.

My own beginning in filmmaking as a member of the production staff of the *Black Journal* public television series in 1968 is due as much to the social conditions of the times as to my own energy. During those days, there was general active unrest among the African-American population, due to discrimination and treatment as second-class citizens. The Civil Rights Movement, based on the principles of nonviolence and petitions to the larger society for justice, was beginning to run its course as the marchers and activists were thwarted by violent resistance and government inaction. In addition, the energy and frustration with the slow rate of fundamental change moved from the rural towns of the South to the inner cities of the major urban centers in the North. Thus, planned and spontaneous rebellions, usually sparked by a symbolic incident but also caused by a long list of unjust conditions, erupted in the cities where there were large Black populations like Detroit, Newark, and the Watts section of Los Angeles.

In addition to being subjected to discrimination, Black people especially resented the lack of acknowledged participation in and contributions to U.S. society. A specific complaint was the lack of presence in the electronic media and the negative distortion that took place when we were represented. Therefore, programs, funds, and positions were made available to provide media access for Black images so that Black issues could be addressed. It should be noted that these changes, welcomed by Afro-Americans because of their belief in the power of the media, were not made out of charity, benevolence or good-will, but rather were the result of pressure by the revolutionary potential of the Black protest movement, pressure from the people in the streets who disrupted the normal flow of business and demanded in one form or another—some with bricks, others with pencils—a share in social processes as they perceived them.

It was from these conditions that the *Black Journal* series was created within the tax-supported public television sector. Alvin Perlmutter, a white staff producer at National Educational Television (the pre-Public Broadcasting Service public TV system), conceived of the series idea in April 1968 following the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The idea was enthusiastically approved as an overdue response to both the Kerner Commission report on U.S. race relations, which called for the media to "expand and intensify coverage of the Negro community," and to the growing mood for self-determination in Black communities around the

The Black Journal Series

country. Perlmutter and Black producer/writer Lou Potter were assigned to develop a format and to secure a staff.

After extensive meetings with both leaders and ordinary folks in Black communities around the country, a public affairs-oriented, magazine-format program was decided upon. Then a staff composed of both NET personnel and others hired specifically for *Black Journal* was assembled. I was a graduate film student at Columbia University at the time but had been recently suspended due to my involvement in the 1968 Columbia University student takeover. Fresh from the barricades and a night in jail, I was interviewed and hired by NET as an associate producer. At this point, there emerged a basic contradiction that later came back to traumatize this effort. The NET public relations department heralded the series in their press releases as programs "by, for and about Black people," but, although two Black on-camera hosts—independent filmmaker William Greaves and former Chicago radio news reporter Lou House (who later changed his "slave" name to an African name, Wali Sadiq)—were hired, the staff ended up with 12 Blacks out of a staff of 20. More important, Perlmutter, who was white, became the executive producer with editorial control for the series.

The series went into active production in May, had its premiere broadcast in June 1968, and was greeted by both critical acclaim and an unprecedented (for public television) viewer response. The first show's segments consisted of an interview from an Oakland prison with Huey Newton on the future of the Black Panthers, a report on the Poor Peoples' Campaign in Washington, D.C., a satirical skit about the use of Blacks in advertisements, an essay on the view of the future by graduating Black college seniors, a profile of a Harlem-based manufacturer of African style clothing, a portrait of a Black jockey, and coverage of a Coretta King address at Harvard University.

Despite the immediate public success of the series, certain questions still had to be addressed: Who was the primary audience—Blacks, whites, or an integrated audience? Did this decision affect the content of the program and how? Was the use of largely white film crews a contradiction to the stated goals of *Black Journal*? Little by little, questions of assignments and editorial points of view became points of dispute among the staff. For example, when a breakdown of the percentage of white-produced shows to Black-produced shows was done, it was discovered that the former far outnumbered the latter. Disagreements over editorial politics emerged as well. When a white producer wrote a news piece introduction stating that the Black community supported Israel and disavowed Arab protests over the seizure of land, an argument broke out in the studio during the taping and was quelled only after the narration was rewritten.

The issue came to a head when 11 Black members of the production staff demanded that the white executive producer be replaced by a Black executive producer, citing the NET press statement that *Black Journal* was produced "by, for and about Black people." When the NET management refused to appoint Lou Potter, the series' managing editor, as the executive producer, the 11 went out on strike in protest and made the incident public in a press conference. In an article printed in *Variety*, NET's management claimed that its intention was "to promote from within the unit and to increase the Black composition of the unit as quickly as staff members were ready for advancement." Wire services, trade papers, and mainstream media columnists wrote extensively about the strike, and within a week NET agreed to the demands. Greaves, the show's host, became the new executive producer. Perlmutter became a consultant with no editorial power. Potter was given the new position of executive editor and the option of working on other NET projects, and most of the other white producers were phased out to return to other NET commitments. (Phil Burton remained as the sole white producer and did several excellent pieces.)

After this traumatic experience, several changes took place. The group



St. Clair Bourne began his professional filmmaking career as a staff producer for NET's *Black Journal* in 1968, shortly after being suspended from Columbia University for participating in campus protests.



Black Journal editor Madeline Anderson and producer Kent Garrett talk to the press at the end of the program's 1968 season. Anderson later became the first Black woman producer at NET.

spirit of the *Black Journal* staff took on an added commitment to "the people," but also, because of the well-publicized struggle around the control of the show, we gained support from leaders of the national Black community. Furthermore, we gained a sizeable white audience who wanted to see what all the noise had been about. Interestingly, the overall white reaction was not as antagonistic as we expected, primarily because we didn't use our airtime denouncing white racism (that it existed was given) but rather documenting, exploring, and articulating African-American political, economic, and cultural issues. With only one hour per month of *Black Journal* programming competing with the infinite hours of "White Journals," we thought that we shouldn't waste time ranting against whites, because our mission was to supply Black people with valuable information and analysis. Another important change that occurred after the strike was staff editor Madeline Anderson's promotion to producer, the staff's first Black woman producer. Although there had been a white female producer and Black women had served as production assistants, editors, and researchers, there had never been a Black female producer at NET.

The process of making a *Black Journal* documentary usually involved selecting a topic culled from personal contacts or from the library filled with



Horace Jenkins worked as an associate producer on NET's science program *Spectrum* before joining *Black Journal* as a producer.

Far right: Black Journal co-host Lou House interviews the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, leader of the Nation of Islam, in his Chicago home. The *Black Journal* segment featuring Muhammad was the first extensive appearance of the prominent Black leader on U.S. television.

Right: Bourne (right) confers with cinematographer Ray Lewis at Your Supermarket, a Chicago chain store operated by the Nation of Islam, during production of a *Black Journal* program.

various Black newspapers from around the country. This was discussed at the weekly editorial meeting (which was rarely fully attended since someone was always out in the field). The producer, sometimes aided by an overworked staff researcher, then researched background and often flew to continue this work on location, never for more than four to five days. Upon his or her return, a script was written and budgeted, and within two weeks or so the producer and crew flew back to shoot. The editing process rarely took more than two or three weeks, and the documentary, which could range from 10 to 30 minutes, often aired on the next program.

We considered ourselves in the cultural vanguard, and, in a way, we were because we were the first and only national Black public affairs series on the air. In hindsight, it was executive producer Greaves who set that tone of being the sole electronic representative of the "movement." A Harlem-born actor-turned-filmmaker, Greaves had worked with the Canadian Film Board in the 1950s to escape the absence of opportunities he faced in this country, and he returned with production experience and a sense of responsibility that he took very seriously.

In our editorial meetings, Greaves laid out the editorial guidelines that came to distinguish and unify our content. *Black Journal*, he stated, should: 1. define the Black reality of any potential film situation, 2. identify the causes of any problems in that situation, and 3. document attempts to resolve those problems, whether successful or not. In this way, Greaves believed, each short documentary would be a teaching tool on how Black people could work to resolve common problems. Films about important cultural, political, and educational figures should document their existence within a society whose history almost always excluded them. Greaves knew what we younger staff members didn't: this filmmaking opportunity would not last but the films would.

Because of the unique national position of *Black Journal* within the media landscape during 1968 to 1971, we undertook several projects to improve so-called "minority" (what we called Third World) participation. Even our own producers on the series relied on largely white crews because there were extremely few Third World freelance technicians, due to the difficulty of finding work regularly and thus gaining experience and skill. The Black Journal Film Workshop was created to fill this void. Word soon got around that a 10-week crash course in basic film production was being offered and that accomplished graduates could possibly get camera crew assignments. The instructors were both Black and white technicians who volunteered their time to teach the new recruits. This created a pool of Third World technicians who began to work on not only *Black Journal* documentaries but, armed with sample reels, began to get work on other productions as well. Ultimately, Peggy Pinn, staff production coordinator, quit that post, raised money for staff and equipment, and managed the Film Workshop for five years, training hundreds of Third World technicians, many of whom still work in the film and television industries.

Film critic and historian Clyde Taylor has written extensively about contemporary independent filmmaking and the influence of the style of *Black Journal* on the editorial tone and the documentary images used to define Black issues. Previously, television would rarely, if ever, present material from a Black participant's point of view. A white commentator always interpreted for the audience what "those people want," either through narration or an on-camera appearance. This was standard television news procedure. At *Black Journal* we insisted that the people in our films speak for themselves as much as possible and, if narration was used, that the narrator assume a tone of advocacy. There was also a strong cultural identification with Africa, which was a part of the reassertion of the movement's African roots and cultural values; for example, the show's hosts often wore African dress, and African drumming was used as intro music.

At that time—again, because of the political climate—a constituency was created for this new Black programming or as it began to be called, "minority programming." As we saw it, the purpose of "minority programming" in the public affairs sector of television news was clear—to provide the so-called "minorities" with an opportunity to address each other on issues that they considered important. In addition to *Black Journal*, there was a series called *Soul!*, an entertainment program that provided a forum for performers who had virtually been ignored by mainstream television. It's hard to imagine it in this era of Bill Cosby, but there was a time when one could look long and hard without seeing a Black face on any TV program. Then came *Black Journal* and an explosion of local public affairs shows aimed at the so-called "minority" audience.

Both of these pioneering programs performed a necessary function quite effectively but were created as a response to an admitted deficiency: to serve an audience that had never been adequately addressed directly before. The programs and their imitators could be called "the first generation of minority programming." If there was a flaw in this first effort, it was a narrowness of vision that could not be avoided at that time. By addressing Blacks about Blacks only, for example, a large part of the viewing audience was excluded, but more importantly, the role of so-called "minorities" within the total framework of U.S. society and culture was ignored.

The second generation of "minority" programming—based on the premise that in the beginning it had been necessary to affirm our culture—attempted to correct some of these unavoidable limitations. An example of this corrective programming was a PBS program called *Interface*, which showed the interaction of various cultures in the U.S. by tackling topics based in everyday life. Developed by Black producer/writer Ardie Ivie and hosted by *Black Journal* graduate Tony Batten, *Interface* concentrated on ethnic group interactions but also limited itself to a certain aspect of life in the United States, namely, cultural (in the anthropological sense) interaction. At the same time, another program, *Black Perspective on the News*, took a "hard news" approach and opened its list of guests to all the races, with the understanding that all people in this country can be affected by a





variety of newsmakers of all skin colors. However, the news format prevented the viewer from receiving a multi-dimensional understanding of the issues covered. In short, we still spoke to Blacks but about non-Black issues as well as Black issues.

The next step which should have been taken would have featured Blacks as participants in U.S. society talking about any issue, that is, a view and interpretation of issues based in the so-called "minority" experience but treating issues, trends, and phenomena not necessarily connected to "minority" life. This would bring an unjaded eye to not only institutions of special interest to "minorities" but also to those institutions that affect everyone as well, for it must be understood that all things in the U.S. affect all people in the U.S. in some way. However, this phase never developed fully, primarily because of the political resurgence of right-wing conservatives, calculated attacks by the Nixon and Reagan administrations to stop and, in fact, roll back the social advances that people have struggled to achieve, and, most important, the lack of Black participation in decision-making within the political and economic process.

The life of *Black Journal* was closely allied to the Black movement that gave birth to it. And so, as money for social programs began to be cut back in the early seventies, *Black Journal*'s production budget was reduced from $100,000 a program to $50,000 a program by the NET management. To compensate, on-location documentaries were cut back, more in-studio production was done, and summer reruns were instituted. Appeals were made to foundations, corporations, and community organizations for production funds, but the change in the political agenda affected the ability and/or willingness to contribute to a television series that advocated social change.

As the production funds decreased, it became more difficult to maintain the high standard with which we started, so, little by little, the staff began seeking other avenues for their their ideas and talent. Greaves, who had his own production company before he joined the *Black Journal* staff, resigned. Other producers applied for and got jobs at network news departments. I left in April 1971 to pursue more personal and more stylized film projects. Several months later, Tony Brown became the new executive producer and began experimenting with formats that would attract financial underwriting. After several format changes ranging from a game show to a *Carson*-type talk show to a variety entertainment show, Brown changed the name of the series to *Tony Brown's Journal*; he continues as executive producer/host to this day. As one of six staff producers for the series, I spent almost three years traveling around the U.S. making documentaries about various aspects and issues of Black America. It is a lesson that I have never forgotten—that as a filmmaker or film artist, my source comes from the audience that I hope to serve. Of course, my understanding of what this means became more complicated as time went on.

The political swing to the right and the deterioration of the economic system that occurred in the past decade and a half affected Black filmmakers more than their white counterparts. In the Black independent production sector, an area that has always always been difficult to sustain, alternative sources like public television, foundation grants, and other special programs have decreased. Furthermore, the dominance of the right-wing has reduced the range of "producible subjects" and acceptable images. This, in turn, has created a wave of escapist images and stories that distort and/or reinterpret any creative elements that might seriously challenge the world view of those who control the principle resources.

Despite these major obstacles—obstacles that affect all independent producers, not just black filmmakers—Black history in this country has proven that we have been strong in our cultural expression, and, after all, film and television are indeed that. The social movement that engendered the *Black Journal* series did achieve some of its aims in terms of racial identity and a recognition of the need for economic and political self-determination. Overall, we are no longer obliged to prove our worth or validity on either the small or large screen. Be prepared, then, to see images of Black people created not to react against a falsehood but rather to expand the understanding of who we are in this country and, indeed, in the world. In two recent documentaries, I went abroad to shoot the activities of African-Americans and found that, although previously undocumented in film, they carried with them a tradition and a presence that was recognized by their foreign hosts. In *The Black and the Green*, I followed five Black American activists as they traveled to Belfast to meet with their Irish nationalist counterparts. Their experiences and perceptions about the use of violence in social change form the core of the film's content. However, I was amazed about how much the Irish knew about our condition and struggle in this country. In another film, *Langston Hughes: The Dream Keeper*, I followed Hughes' wanderings of 60 years ago in France, Spain, Russia, and Senegal only to discover that his influence is well-remembered and, in fact, beloved by many in those places. Therefore, be prepared to see other international renderings of the African descendant on the screen.

Already, filmmakers of African descent in England and France, as well as those in African countries are already producing such films and it is only a matter of time before we will see these images on the screens of this country. Self-determination is an act of liberation and, in the end, a healthy process. Everyone should have the right and opportunity to see themselves reflected in the cultural expressions and the reporting of current events of the land in which they live. Mainstream television has proven that, up to now at least, it is incapable or unwilling to do that, so it is up to us, the independents, to fill that vacuum.

St. Clair Bourne is a 20-year veteran producer/director with over 30 films to his credit.

1988 St. Clair Bourne

ELECTRONIC BACKTALK
The Art of Interactive Video



One of Nam June Paik's *Participation TV* sculptures, *Magnet TV* (1965), graphically and metaphorically demonstrates the possibility of interfering with standard television signals.

Photo: © Peter Moore, courtesy Whitney Museum of American Art

Lucinda Furlong

Interactive technologies pervade our daily life. From ordinary telephones, automated banking machines, home shopping on cable TV, video arcade games, and the "point-of-purchase" information and sales kiosks popping up in airports and shopping malls—all these systems employ technologies that facilitate the exchange of information. The most sophisticated interactive technology to date is the interactive videodisc. A marriage of computer and video technologies, interactive videodiscs have the capacity to store and retrieve large quantities of high-quality still and moving images and sound. Film, videotape, slide transparencies, and audio can all be transferred, mastered, and pressed onto a single disc. Unlike videotape, videodiscs provide random access to this data—one can "jump" in a fraction of a second from one place to another in the program, eliminating the necessity of reversing and fast-forwarding. What's more, one can "park" on a still image for an indefinite amount of time without damaging the disc or the machine. Since the discs are made of aluminum coated with polyvinylchloride, they are much sturdier than film or tape.

Perhaps the most attractive feature of videodisc technology is the ability to control highly realistic film, video, or computer graphic renderings in real time. For instance, a well-known early interactive videodisc, *The Aspen Project* created by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Media Lab in 1979, simulated every street, intersection, and building in Aspen, Colorado, so that one could "drive" through the city taking various routes. No doubt, this capability is what made interactive videodisc so appealing to NASA and the U.S. military, which originally developed it for flight simulators and training purposes. Prototypes of the new Advanced Tactical Fighters have been tested in simulators which replicate the sights, sounds, and feel of aerial combat. While older simulators could not provide realistic scenery, the newer ones can create highly detailed images of the surrounding landscape. According to an article by Andrea Adelson in the *New York Times*,

> Two computers create the external world, including enemy planes and missiles. One draws the outline of these objects, based in part on real-world data obtained from classified sources. The other computer controls the panorama and adds texture, such as pock marks in asphalt or the bolt-pattern of an aircraft wing.[1]

As Adelson points out, simulators, which cost about $20-million, are cheap compared to the estimated total cost (not including overruns) of $46.9-billion for the 750 jet fighters the Air Force plans to build.

Consumer and industrial spin-offs of videodisc systems were introduced in the early 1980s amid much hoopla. While consumer sales of videodisc



***Wipe Cycle* (1969), by Frank Gillette and Ira Schneider, was a gallery installation consisting of closed-cirucit cameras and monitors that involved gallery visitors as both audience and participants.**

Courtesy Raindance Foundation



Douglas Davis in his *Double Entendre* (1981), a radio/television/performance work that incorporated a satellite hook-up between the Whitney Museum in New York City and the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris.

Courtesy Whitney Museum of American Art



Frames from Wendy Clarke's *The Love Tapes* (1977-78), a compilation of three-minute soliloquies on love by over 800 individuals.

Courtesy Museum of Modern Art

players fell far short of industry predictions, the introduction of disc-based video games, such as *Dragon's Lair* in 1983, gave the sagging business a shot in the arm. The enormous success of *Dragon's Lair*, which featured recognizable characters, settings, and sound effects, was due to its realism.[2] But it's only since 1986, when IBM began marketing InfoWindow, an interactive training system the company had developed for its own employees, that interactive videodisc has become a growth industry.[3]

From 1986 to 1987, analysts predicted a 35 to 45 percent growth in the number of interactive videodisc systems, a rate that will probably increase. Although not yet as indispensable as the personal computer or the copy machine, interactive videodisc systems are making inroads into industrial and corporate sales and training programs. Both General Motors and Chrysler have interactive "courseware" on hazardous chemicals, a result of an Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulation requiring training for employees on workplace hazards. This mandate, along with IBM's entry into the market, is regarded as one of the key factors in the recent surge of interest in interactive courses: it's considered a relatively cheap and efficient method.

In the sales arena, economy and efficiency are also spurring the use of videodisc. In 1984, Allegheny International, which owns the Sunbeam and Oster product lines, set up Infosource, an interactive kiosk intended to "take the consumer's eye off the price tag, and instead focus on unique product features, high-quality performance and attractive and efficient design." The other advantage, as Allegheny saw it, was the ability to present a consistent message about a product. As Diane Kolyer noted in an article in *Videography*, "Infosource never gets sick, never gets up on the wrong side of the bed, never fumbles or stutters."[4] These applications of interactive videodisc share a straightforward—and technocratic—conception of interactivity. Information can be delivered (and money exchanged) in a consistent manner, and at the pace of the individual user. Information is rationalized, eliminating the individual quirks of salespeople and teachers—and, in all likelihood, their jobs.

A slightly different, although no less technocratic, conception of interactivity informs debates among politicians and social scientists about interactive communication. Much has been made of the potential for interactive technology to revolutionize communication, thereby bolstering democracy. And most discussions of interactivity assume that interactivity means participation, choice, and, above all, communication. However, in *Media for Interactive Communication* Rudy Bretz distinguishes between genuinely interactive systems, in which "each of two (or more) communicants responds to the other" and quasi-interactive systems, which involve "data response" or *Gong Show*-type interactions.[5] In the latter, mass audiences are given a menu of options that appear on their TV screen. The options range from choices about the resolution of a TV drama plot to public opinion polls. This distinction informs a comparison between the so-called "Reading experiment" in interactive television for senior citizens in Reading, Pennsylvania, and Warner-Amex's highly publicized QUBE system in Columbus, Ohio. These two systems are prime examples of Bretz' two forms of



In their "public interactive sculpture" *Hole in Space* (1980), Kit Galloway and Sherrie Rabinowitz used a satellite link between New York City and Los Angeles to establish communications between people in the street in both cities.

Courtesy Museum of Modern Art

Grahame Weinbren and Roberta Friedman's *The Erl King* installation at the Whitney Museum's 1987 Biennial exhibition.

Courtesy artists Whitney Museum of American Art and artists (far right)

interactivity and the attendant successes and failures.

Interactive television was introduced in Reading in 1976 as one of three pilot projects funded by the National Science Foundation.[6] Installation of the system followed a period of intense scrutiny of community relations, in which numerous studies and reports stressed the potential public benefit to be gained from two-way noncommercial services such as interactive educational TV and direct citizen feedback on local political issues.[7] The project was developed by a community-based consortium working with a group from the Alternate Media Center at New York University led by Red Burns. AMC, founded by George Stoney, was a hotbed of "interactivity" in the form of community video and public access cable TV. AMC often made tapes in New York City that allowed community members to speak about particular issues. Since few people had cable TV, Stoney *et al.* would play the tapes back in barber shops, on stoops, or from the back of a car in order to spark discussion and/or action.[8]

Although the original purpose of the Reading project was to determine if interactive TV could effectively and economically deliver social service information, the system took hold and is still running. Senior citizens congregate at three community centers, interconnected for two-way transmission with City Hall and the local Social Security office. Cameras are set up in each location, and a split screen shows the speakers in two locations participating in discussions. Their interactions, which occur for the most part in talk-show formats, provided the programming for the cable system's interactive channel. The success of the Reading system resulted from a number of factors, but the most important was the high degree of community involvement in the system's design from the beginning, as well as its ability to facilitate actual social interaction.

Not so Warner-Amex's QUBE system in Columbus, which provided the means for transmitting data from cable subscribers' homes to the cable facility but never entailed any dialogue. A typical QUBE interaction involved a multiple-choice question on an issue, such as whether a new shopping mall should be built. When it was introduced in 1981, QUBE was touted as a "politically powerful ally of democracy." But, as Jean Bethke Elshtain argued, QUBE is based not on democratic principles, which involve the active participation of citizens in debate and deliberation, but on a plebiscite system that merely registers public opinion.

> Plebiscitism is compatible with authoritarian politics carried out under the guise of, or with the connivance of, majority opinion. That opinion can be registered by easily manipulated, ritualistic plebiscites, so there is no need for debate on substantive questions.[9]

Rather than facilitating discussion, this brand of interactive television provides a range of predetermined answers or opinions. The illusion of choice precludes debate and dissent from a carefully inscribed set of responses. Elshtain concludes, "The interactive shell game cons us into believing we are participating when we are really simply performing as the responding 'end' of a prefabricated system of external stimuli."[10]

While Stoney and other community video activists such as Jon Alpert and Keiko Tsuno, working in New York City's Chinatown, were making and showing street tapes, many of their artist colleagues were engaged with other concepts of interactivity. Rooted in the art and theater of the late 1950s and early sixties, artists articulated interactivity in terms of audience participation. Allan Kaprow, along with Claes Oldenburg, Edward Kienholz, Red Grooms, and others, were making "Environments"—room-sized constructions made of street junk and everyday objects—in response to what they saw as the limits of Abstract Expressionism. Kaprow, in particular, began to think about incorporating gallery visitors into these projects.

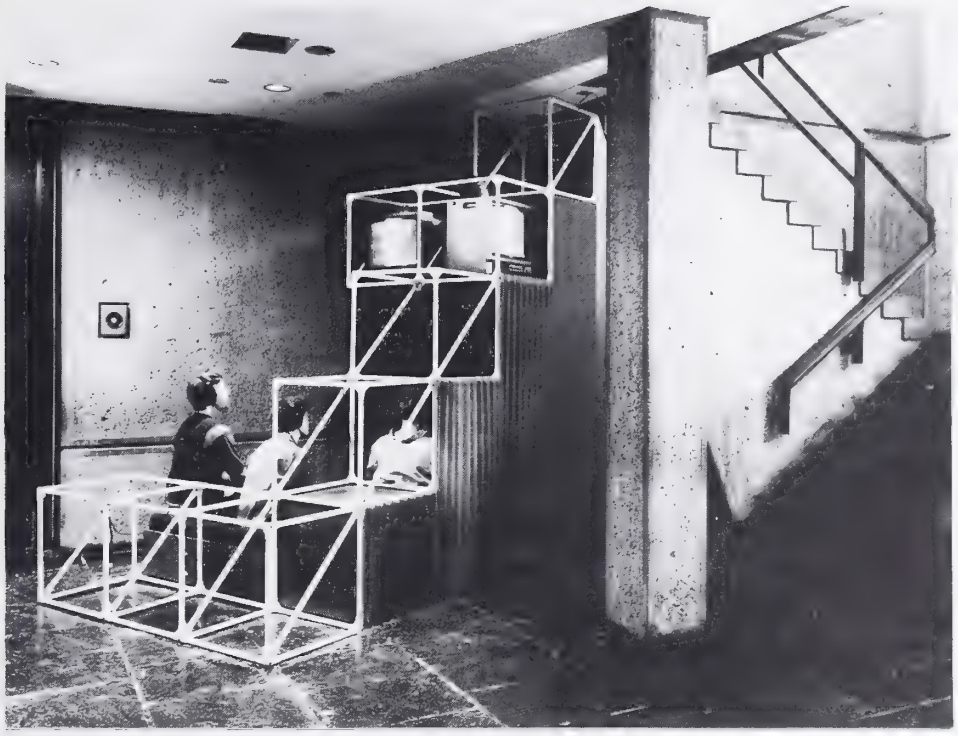
> I immediately saw that every visitor to the Environment was part of it. I had not really thought of it before. And so I gave him [*sic*] occupations like moving something, turning switches on—just a few things. Increasingly during 1957 and 1958, this suggested a more "scored" responsibility for that visitor. I offered him more and more to do until there developed the Happening.[11]

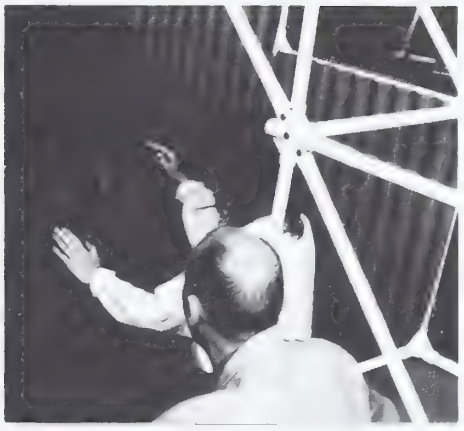
In Happenings, a tightly scripted series of actions taken from everyday activities were performed—not acted—sometimes simultaneously by various artist friends enlisted by Kaprow. He never intended that the term Happening would be used as a generic label but merely as a way to describe his gallery events without calling them "theater pieces" or "performances." The term stuck, however, after Kaprow presented *18 Happenings in 6 Parts* in 1959 at the Reuben Gallery in New York. In this work visitors to the gallery moved through three rooms Kaprow had constructed. In *Total Art* Adrian Henri describes the evolution of Kaprow's Happenings from

> ritualized theater pieces for a static audience to group rituals, performed mainly in an outdoor environment.... Two types of work emerged, one involving a more or less static audience, the other a walk-around environment.... *Words*, at the Smolin Gallery in 1962, was an arrangement of audience participation devices: rolls of words to move, words on cards hung on strings, words to pin up and rubberstamps to make phrases with.[12]

The breakdown of the distinction between audience and performer reached its extreme in activities staged by a group of artists who called themselves Fluxus. Henri makes a distinction between Happenings and Fluxus events: while Fluxus activities "were chance-generated random-performed pieces," Happenings were "tightly programmed (at least in the early years) environmental works, generally of much longer, and defined duration."[13] Fluxus artists—George Maciunas, Lamonte Young, Dick Higgins, Alison Knowles, George Brecht, Robert Filiou, Nam June Paik, and others—were inspired by the anarchistic precedents of Dada and John Cage's theories about the aesthetic potential of the commonplace and his use of chance operations to generate performances and events. Fluxus was an art of transgression, aimed not only at breaking down the boundary between audience and performer but at eliminating the distinction between art and life in a celebration of the everyday. For instance, in Dick Higgins' *Winter Carol* (1959) the concept of "audience" was eliminated altogether. As Barbara Haskell observed, "No one was invited to 'watch,' a format drastically different from that of most Happenings, in which audiences were participatory if only by virtue of their cramped proximity to the performers."[14]

Audience participation was in the air, but the impact of a number of





theorists dealing with communications, cybernetics, and technology—including those who became household names like Buckminster Fuller, Alvin Toffler, Norbert Wiener, and Marshall McLuhan—gave it a new twist. People working in the new "medium" of video were drawn to McLuhan's and Wiener's ideas in particular. In McLuhan's theory, modern life is characterized by the simultaneous reception of vast amounts of information in the form of sense stimuli: sight, smell, hearing, touch, and taste. This bombardment was compounded, according to Toffler's theory of "future shock," by the impression that people's sense of the rate of change was undergoing a profound escalation, making reality seem "speeded up." Accordingly, a new kind of perception was required so that these stimuli could be apprehended directly through the senses. The emphasis on perception promulgated by this kind of pop theory was complemented by a conception of the artist as communicator. For instance, an article entitled "TV: The Next Medium" published in *Art in America* in 1969 described the artist as a person "who can experience directly through his [*sic*] senses. His effectiveness as an artist can be judged by how well he communicates his perceptions."[15] Just as technology provided the metaphors for this brand of art criticism, technology was proposed as a key component of the communications process, providing the means to create a new global consciousness—McLuhan's proverbial "global village."

One of the artists who reiterated such arguments was Nam June Paik, who extended his earlier Fluxus activities into video. Between 1963 and 1971 he constructed a series of video sculptures called *Participation TV*. In one of these works, *Magnet TV* (1965), he placed a large magnet on top of a TV set, employing the electromagnetic force exerted by the magnet to distort the incoming broadcast TV signal. In another piece, a microphone was attached to a TV. Blowing, clapping, singing, or making other sounds created colorful permutations of the image. During the same period, Joe Weintraub explored similar ideas in his *AC/TV (Audio Controlled Television)* (1969), but without the interactive aspect. In this piece, the brightness of the TV image was controlled by the volume of the music and the color controlled by its pitch.

Paik's participatory sculptures were only minimally interactive, but the video environments developed by his contemporaries, which employed live, closed-circuit video, were more closely linked to the idea of creating sensoria that somehow would change the viewer/participant's perception. John Margolies, the author who proclaimed "TV: The Next Medium," believed that this work represented a

> new concept of art and entertainment experience...the key to the new experience being the provision of options for the spectator's attention. The experience affirms the concepts of participation, simultaneity, spontaneity, and the accidental. Television is a prime example of this new experience with its option of many channels to be viewed simultaneously with a number of receivers or sequentially by changing the channels.[16]

Examples of this kind of work abounded in the late sixties. Les Levine's *Iris* (1968), commissioned by a Philadelphia couple for their home, consisted of three video cameras which would "see" the spectator from three different vantage points. This "giant cybernetic eye," as Levine called it, would then display the images on a bank of six monitors. In his press release announcing the piece, Levine stated the purpose of *Iris*:

> Rather that existing as an art object, *Iris* is an art creator.... This type of participation, in which you are confronted with your image and your reaction to your image, is particularly vital today. Hopefully the spectator becomes aware of and gains an insight into the power of his [*sic*] own image.

One of the most influential video environments built during this period was *Wipe Cycle* (1969), Frank Gillette and Ira Schneider's nine-monitor video mural created for the exhibition "TV as a Creative Medium" at the Howard Wise Gallery in 1969. As a viewer entered the gallery from the elevator, his or her image was picked up by a video camera. Through the use of a time delay, the image of the viewer, which was updated every eight seconds, alternated with broadcast images and a prerecorded tape on the gallery's monitors. Schneider described the piece:

> The most important thing was the notion of information presentation, and the notion of the integration of the audience into the information.... You can watch yourself live watching yourself 8 seconds ago, watching yourself 16 seconds ago, eventually feeling free enough to interact with this matrix, realizing one's own potential as an actor.[17]

Fundamental to such work was the idea that through formal processes alone video environments could change the way people perceive themselves and others. Levine, for instance, predicted that *Iris* would "substantially alter the imaging patterns of the owners."

Yet another participatory project undertaken in the early years of artists' experimentation with television was the 30-minute videotape *The Medium Is the Medium* (1969), produced by the Public Broadcasting Laboratory at WGBH in Boston. Six artists—Aldo Tambellini, Paik, Kaprow, Tad Tadlock, Otto Piene, and James Seawright—were invited to create segments for the tape. In Kaprow's contribution, *Hello*, a group of people gathered at four

Boston locations that were interconnected by 27 monitors and five cameras. Whenever anyone in the group identified themselves or someone they knew on one of the monitors, they were instructed to say "hello." The resulting tape shows them calling out to one another, waving, and smiling. Kaprow explained, "Everyone was a participant, creating, receiving and transmitting information all at once.... We had fun. We played.... The information was not a newscast or lecture, but the most important message of all: oneself in communication with someone else."[18]

With hindsight, it's easy to dismiss this and similar projects as naive and fault them for employing an abstract, uncritical idea of the function of communication. Ironically, Kaprow, whose *Hello* epitomized this kind of work, delivered its most stunning critique just five years later. In "Video Art: Old Wine, New Bottle," published in a 1974 issue of *Artforum*, Kaprow singled out the work of Ira Schneider, Frank Gillette, Douglas Davis, Juan Downey, and others as "simple-minded and sentimental." He bemoaned their lack of critical thought and their "constant reliance on the glitter of the machines to carry the fantasy."[19] And he argued that the construction of often elaborate video environments intended to provide new perceptual experiences was no more experimental or novel that the "experience chambers" popular in the eighteenth century. Part of the problem, according to Kaprow, was that these projects were rooted in a certain progressive philosophy of education. Accordingly, "If people are given a privileged space and some sophisticated toys to play with, they will naturally do something enlightening, when in fact they usually don't." Kaprow concluded by comparing this work to world fairs' "futurama displays, with their familiar 19th-century push-button optimism and didacticism. They are part fun-house, part psychology lab."

Although Kaprow was correct to challenge the thinking behind this work, few other critics had done so, except those writers married to reactionary aesthetics.[20] Interactive projects were fun. And while technology continued to develop at a breakneck pace—from closed-circuit video cameras and monitors to, say, satellite hook-ups—artists kept producing optimistic work with it. At the same time, the emphasis shifted. The outlandish predictions about the ameliorating social effects of cybernetics failed to materialize, giving way to slightly less hyperbolic (if no less idealistic) responses. Nevertheless, communication still dominated as an important theme. There are numerous examples of such projects, using various means, but descriptions of three will suffice as illustrations.

Douglas Davis' performances that incorporated radio, television, and satellites in the 1970s variously represented efforts to "humanize" technology. In a recording of one of these, *Handling (The Austrian Tapes)* (1974), Davis stands alone in a darkened space. Placing his hands on an invisible glass surface that gives the illusion he is inside a TV touching the screen, Davis says, "Please come to the television set. Place your hands against my hands. Think about our touching—each other." Davis solemnly repeats this invitation and then makes a similar plea, concluding: "Think about this—our linking." Here and his other projects, Davis creates a metaphorical space in which he reflects on what communications technology should be. *The Last Nine Minutes*, produced for a live satellite transmission at *Documenta 6* in 1977, also delineates a space that represents the inside of a TV set. Seeking to reduce the distance between himself as producer and the viewer, he entreats the audience to break through the space separating them: "I will find you, in nine minutes, and when I do, we will destroy this thing, this idea." He pounds on a transparent piece of plexiglass and scratches it with a knife. The plexiglass is placed in front of the camera to give the illusion that Davis is actually maiming the TV screen. In the end he rushes forward and knocks down the plexiglass, accompanied by the sound of shattering glass.

If these performances symbolically vent Davis' frustration with the one-way delivery of communications technologies, they never explain the economic and historical factors that underlie the institutions of television. This theme—seeking interpersonal connection through the use of communications technology without questioning how the institutions that control this technology increase social fragmentation and individual isolation—also runs through Wendy Clarke's *Love Tapes*, a collection of over 800 three-minute tapes produced over several years, beginning in 1978. In *The Love Tapes* various people sit in a private booth designed by the artist and are recorded as they reflect on the subject of love. Clarke, who described *The Love Tapes* as a "public, interactive video art event," set up her booth in museums and other public spaces, such as the World Trade Center. After watching other *Love Tapes,* participants were asked to select background music, choose from an assortment of backdrops (e.g., scenes of beaches or forests), and talk spontaneously about love for three minutes while watching themselves on a monitor. After making a tape, each participant was allowed to decide whether to erase it or allow it to be shown publicly.

According to Clarke, *The Love Tapes*

> provides an extraordinary opportunity to watch and hear people reveal a deep dimension of themselves.... Through this particular use of video, we see a glimpse of humanity not otherwise possible. People begin to see that they no longer need be confined to a passive relationship with TV, but can become part of its content.

Personal disclosure—and, by implication, intimacy—is the goal of this work, but the tapes merely provide an *illusion* of intimacy. The project of producing intimacy via video presumes a structural attribute supposedly inherent in television technology that has been underdeveloped, a failure that can be corrected on the level of content.

If Clarke delineated a pseudo-private space within which people could express their personal feelings—albeit for public consumption—*Hole in Space* (1980), a "public interactive sculpture" by Kit Galloway and Sherrie Rabinowitz, sought to unite people via a live satellite hook-up between New York City and Los Angeles. Large video screens were placed in a street window of Avery Fisher Hall in New York and a window of a Los Angeles department store. With no prior publicity, cameras and microphones were set up, and for three evenings people in each location could see and talk with people on the other side of the country. As word about the piece spread, crowds grew larger and more ebullient, entertaining each other with charades and songs. Relatives arranged rendezvous at this free "video phone," bringing babies and family snapshots to the sites. Perhaps *Hole in Space* can be seen as a more technically sophisticated version of Kaprow's *Hello*, but there is one other crucial difference. Whereas *Hello* occurred in a private space populated by a preselected group of people, *Hole in Space* was more random, more public. People discovered it by accident, hence the quality of interaction was more spontaneous and less self-conscious.

Over and over, interactivity has been articulated in terms of establishing links between artists and audience, taking technologies developed for corporate and military use and appropriating them for humanistic purposes. The desire to overcome personal alienation and bridge cultural differences, to reestablish interpersonal intimacy using technologies that have been instrumental in maintaining fragmenting isolation—these are lofty ideals laced with humanist social theory. But notably absent from these works is a political critique of the *structures* of communication and how television technology not only reproduces images but social relations as well—an understanding of ideology. By concentrating on the formal aspects of interactivity and elevating technology as the central determinant of social interactions, these projects have illustrated a positivist model of technological progress.

Videodisc, the most recent video technology to excite interest among artists, however, has promised a form of interactivity where the processes by which meaning is structured attain center stage. So far, not many artists have produced interactive videodiscs, probably because it's prohibitively expensive, with incremental increases in cost depending on the degree of interactivity achieved. The single "dumb" Level I disc provides random access to still frames, while the Level II system, which has a tiny internal computer, consists of a videodisc player, a keypad, a videodisc, and a monitor. To access a frame or "chapter" the user presses a search button on the keypad, then enters a frame or chapter number to display a particular frame or sequence. A Level III system uses an external computer that provides expanded digital storage capacity. Since the computer can switch between disc players, multiple discs can be used to increase the amount of information available to the user. It also allows the capability to use



Cameron Johann plays the son and Ken Glickfeld the father in *The Erl King*'s "Burning Child" dream sequence, based on a passage from Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*.

Courtesy artists

peripheral devices like an infrared touch screen instead of a keypad (some industry personnel call this Level IV). Writing in *Videography*, Linda Helgerson pointed out, "The more interactivity, the more still frames are required.... The level of interactivity directly affects the work of the project team: the scriptwriting, flowcharting, software design and development, and preproduction work."[21]

Lynn Hershman is credited with making the first artist's interactive videodisc, *Lorna* (1984), although other artists had previously worked on interactive videotape projects. The subject of *Lorna*, a Level II system, is a fictional 41-year-old woman suffering from agoraphobia. *Lorna* presents a branching narrative where the trajectory and outcome are determined by the viewer, based on selections from a number of options provided by Hershman. Through the use of a remote-control unit, the viewer pushes buttons on a keypad to determine what happens next. For instance, there are three possible endings: Lorna remains a prisoner in her own apartment; she shoots herself; or she shoots the television set, an act that symbolizes her emancipation.[22] For Hershman, interactive video represents a liberating social force. "Rather than being remotely controlled by media environments, the controls quite literally are now in the hands of the users, as is the key to a new area of individual freedom and empowerment."[23] But are users really being offered choices, or just another new toy, a more sophisticated version of a video game? Is interactive video, to paraphrase Kaprow, old wine in a new bottle?

Hershman's hyperbole aside, *Lorna* suggests two structuring activities—narrativity and gaming—that may shed light on why artists are attracted to interactive videodisc. Recent narrative theory has departed from the structural analysis of narrative units and structures in favor of the study of the dynamics of narrative—how a plot moves forward and works on the reader. As Theresa de Lauretis articulated this shift in *Alice Doesn't*, the focus is not on

> narrative but narrativity: not so much the structure of narrative (its component units and their relations) as its works and effects. Today narrative theory is no longer or not primarily intent on establishing a logic, a grammar, or a formal rhetoric of narrative: what it seeks to understand is the nature of the structuring and destructuring, even destructive, processes at work in textual and semiotic production.[24]

The interest in how narrative works, how it causes us to turn pages and construct meaning, derives from the concept of how desire operates in narrative. As Peter Brooks has described the function of desire, "We can, then, conceive of the reading of plot as a form of desire that carries us forward, onward, through the text. Narratives both tell of desire—typically present some story of desire—and arouse and make use of desire as dynamic of signification."[25] And David Tafler has identified some of interactive videodisc's characteristics that make this technology particularly relevant to a discussion of narrative: its lack of a linear structure, the ability for time and duration to be "self-regulated" by the user, and the shift from the "reading" of the text—i.e., its passive consumption—to a writerly mode, in which the viewer actively constructs meaning. "As a non-sequential index of moments, files, and clues, the interactive process takes on whatever meaning that may exist in its structure from the configuration of the individual spectator's exploration and play."[26] With interactive videodiscs, gaming structures are established that allow the user to engage in those ordering operations. Depending on the number of discs and players used, a seemingly inexhaustible number of combinations can be created, affording different interpretive possibilities.

It's telling that a number of artists who have previously produced videotapes referenced to semiotic theory have also been working with videodiscs. Peter D'Agostino, whose videotape *Quarks* (1980) borrows from both subatomic physics and linguistic theory, in 1986 produced *Double You (and X, Y, Z)*, a four-channel interactive videodisc that uses structural linguistics to explore language acquisition. Juan Downey, who produced *The Looking Glass* (1981) and *Information Withheld* (1983)—two tapes inspired by structuralism and semiotics—is completing an interactive videodisc based on his videotape *J.S. Bach* (1986). In this work, *Play Bach*, the viewer encounters a menu of 13 options consisting of, among other things, different variations on a Bach fugue performed by harpsichordist Elaine Comparone, visual representations of the score, and versions which compress and expand the fugue's tempo. Each segment is two minutes long. After the viewer selects and views a given version, the program returns to the menu, from which a different selection can be made. *Play Bach* uses one videodisc (which limits the number of possible permutations) and attempts to establish a correlation between the musical structure of a Bach fugue, with its theme and variations, and the operation of an interactive videodisc. For Downey, "There are certain counterpoint principles; it's a natural relationship between Bach and the computer."

Perhaps the most ambitious and complex artists' interactive videodisc project to date is Grahame Weinbren and Roberta Friedman's *The Erl King* (1986), which poses a number of questions about the dynamics of narrative. *The Erl King* is not structured as a branching story like *Lorna*, or as a series of variations on a theme like *Play Bach*. Rather than presenting a number of possible "meanings" or narrative developments from which to choose, the program tries to direct the viewer/player toward the construction of meaning based on desire. The viewer sits at a console facing a touch-sensitive screen, while a text on the screen invites the viewer to "touch," thus activating the program. Three videodisc players, each with approximately 50,000 frames, are interfaced with a computer, a video switcher, and the infrared screen. Whenever the screen is touched the computer sends a signal to the switcher, which controls the three disc players. Depending on what sector of the screen is touched, different visual and/or audio material plays on the monitor. Sometimes touching the screen changes the audio, or just the video, or both.

When the program is activated, a woman appears and begins to sing (in German) a Schubert *lied* based on a poem by Goethe, *Der Erlkoenig*, which tells the story of a father's failure to respond to his young son's fears of the mythical Erlking who is trying to entice the boy. As the father carries the boy through a forest on a stormy night, the boy pleads with his father for help. When the father reaches the edge of the forest, the boy is dead in his arms. A second set of images and text presents an enactment of the "Burning Child" dream from Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*, which, like the Goethe poem, concerns a father's failure to heed his son's premonitions of imminent danger. For Weinbren, the structure of dreams—"the way the mind can coalesce different lines of thought, images, beliefs, desires, and



A line from Goethe's *Erlkoenig* painted on an abandoned car in New York City, is one of the images used in Weinbren and Friedman's interactive *The Erl King*.

Courtesy artists

memories into a single image"—paralleled his thinking about interactive video. "I'm interested in finding images that are conglomerates of not necessarily consistent themes and then letting the apparatus make the viewer aware of the interlocking elements."[27]

The Erl King employs a mosaic structure: depending on which section of the screen is touched, different visual and audio information appear. There are approximately 90 minutes of material assembled on the three videodiscs accessible to the viewer/player. Besides the Freud and Goethe sections, Weinbren and Friedman created approximately 30 more scenes in which visual elements from the two central motifs appear: psychoanalyst Stuart Schneiderman interpreting the "Burning Child" dream, activity in a chicken processing plant, a Chinese chef at work, a roller derby, a performance by a trombone and percussion group, and so on. They also included about 500 still images.

What are we to make of it all? That is precisely the point. Weinbren stated that he was "interested in making an apparatus that would display some image material in time and encourage viewers to respond to it by interrupting the flow."[28] Unlike film, which lures the spectator into the process of watching or "constructs" its subject, interactive video can constantly disrupt the narrative flow of the moving image. In Weinbren's words,

> The linear quality of narrative is challenged by this medium simply because it bypasses beginning at one point and ending at another: the beginning is where the viewers walk in, the ending where they walk away. Exactly how things happen in that time is determined by what viewers do in it, and at any point there is the potential for something different to happen.[29]

Because *The Erl King* deals with the intersection of narrative and cinema as systems of signification, it is more akin to avant-garde film than earlier interactive video experiments. By investigating psychic structures, not sensory stimuli, a different agenda is proposed: an inquiry into where meaning resides and is produced. Whereas works like *Wipe Cycle* or *Iris* were calculated to alter viewers' perceptions of themselves through the interaction with information systems—a behavioristic model of perception—*The Erl King* invites the viewer to enjoy the unexpected twists and turns of unconscious associations. And, unlike *The Last Nine Minutes* or *Hole in Space*, which conceived of interactivity as communication between individuals, *The Erl King* assumes that communication is more complex, linked to narrative processes. In this piece, videodisc technology supplies the means to reproduce the dynamics of narratives, sidestepping the formal *cul-de-sacs* and idealization of technology that have been common to artists' concepts of interactivity. Although attempts to rationalize everyday life, evident in devices like automated bank tellers and computerized training programs, will undoubtedly remain the prevalent uses of interactive videodisc systems, Weinbren and Friedman's work represents a departure from previous efforts by artists to humanize this machinery. Instead, *The Erl King* acknowledges and exploits the irrationality of lived experience.

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The Limits of Copyright
MORAL RIGHTS AND THE BERNE CONVENTION

Robert C. Harris

[Editor's note: This article is presented only for the purpose of educating independent film- and videomakers and is not to be taken as legal advice.]

¶ Goodwrite writes the screenplay for a film. The film credits attribute screenplay credit to M. Pasta. Have Goodwrite's rights been violated?

¶ The producer and director of a two-and-a-half-hour film learn that a television distributor has edited it and plans to license broadcast in a two-hour time slot, including 30 minutes of commercials. Can they stop it?

These two scenarios raise issues of moral rights, also known by the French term *droit moral*. Moral rights have become the focus of considerable attention because of renewed interest in the Berne Convention, an international copyright treaty. The United States government is now seriously considering becoming a signatory to the Berne Convention. To the extent that the U.S. Copyright Act must be amended if the U.S. joins the Berne Convention, this will clearly affect the entertainment industry.

This article will discuss an important provision of the Berne Convention—moral rights, the current status of such rights in the United States, and their impact on filmmakers.

★ ★ ★

The Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works was concluded on September 9, 1886. This original convention went through a series of revisions—Paris (1896), Berlin (1908), Rome (1928), Brussels (1948), Stockholm (1967), and Paris (1971). The International Union for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, better known as the Berne Union, is comprised of countries adhering to one or more of the revised Berne conventions.

The Berne Convention is generally considered the paragon international copyright treaty, not only because it is the oldest but because it affords the highest level of copyright protection. Copyright protection under the Berne Convention is based on the principle of "national treatment," meaning that a member country of Berne must afford a citizen of another member country the same copyright protection it affords to its own citizens. (*E.g.*, England must grant to a French author the same copyright protection England affords its own authors.) In addition, the Berne Convention imposes certain minimal standards of copyright protection that must be part of the copyright laws of each member nation. Further, copyright protection may not be conditioned on compliance with any "formalities," such as a requirement to register the work or to attach a copyright notice to the work.

There are presently 76 nations adhering to one of the Berne Conventions. The United States has never joined the Berne Union. This largely results from historic rivalries between U.S. and British publishing houses, which generated opposition against the national treatment doctrine. Also, U.S. copyright laws have imposed and still impose formalities that are inconsistent with Berne principles. In 1954, the U.S. ratified a second international copyright treaty, the Universal Copyright Convention. Like Berne, the UCC is administered by an organization of the United Nations and is based on the principle of national treatment. However, the UCC's minimal standards are not as high as those of Berne, and the UCC permits the imposition of some formalities as preconditions to obtaining copyright protection. There are almost 80 countries that belong to the UCC, and many nations adhere to both Berne and the UCC. In addition, the U.S. has direct treaties with a number of countries and thus has formal copyright relations with almost 100 countries.

Why the push for the U.S. to join Berne? First, the U.S. would gain copyright relations with 24 countries that adhere to Berne but not the UCC and with whom the U.S. has no direct or clear copyright relationship. Second, as one of the world's great disseminators of intellectual property and with rapid advances in information technologies, the U.S. has faced increasing problems policing infringement of the works of its authors and creators in many areas throughout the world. It is believed that adherence to Berne, considered to be the preeminent copyright treaty, would enhance our credibility in dealing with foreign governments and obtaining their assistance in respecting and enforcing intellectual property rights.

Adherence to Berne has been advocated by copyright owners, scholars, the Copyright Office, the Reagan administration, and a number of members

Moral rights, as set forth in the Berne Convention, consist of two separate rights. The first is the right of an author to claim authorship of his/her work, also known as the right of paternity. This right encompasses more than merely the affirmative right to be named as author. The second moral right is that of an author to prevent distortion, mutilation, or any other modification of a work that would be derogatory to the author's reputation, also referred to as the right of integrity.

The Berne Convention refers to moral rights as personal rights, in that such rights protect the reputation of the author, and provides that moral rights apply even after the transfer of "economic" rights in the copyright (e.g., the right to receive payment for reproduction, performance, etc.). For example, even after sale of motion picture rights to a film/videomaker, a novelist would be entitled to enforce his/her moral rights.

of Congress. In June 1986, President Reagan transmitted the Berne Convention to the Senate for its advice and consent. As noted, the Berne Convention imposes certain minimal standards that must be met by each member state. There has been much writing and discussion—including testimony at Congressional hearings—concerning what changes would have to be made in the U.S. copyright law to bring it into compliance with the Berne Convention. One important issue is that of moral rights, and there is much debate about whether any changes would have to be made in the U.S. copyright law for the U.S. to satisfy the Berne Convention moral rights provisions. The moral rights issue has become a controversial one in the entertainment industry, and various facets of the motion picture industry have found themselves taking different sides.

Moral rights were introduced in the Berne Convention in 1928. Article 6*bis*(i) of the 1971 text (to which the U.S. would adhere, should it join Berne) provides:

> Independently of the author's economic rights, and even after the transfer of the said rights, the author shall have the right to claim authorship of the work and to object to any distortion, mutilation or other modification of, or other derogatory action in relation to, the said work, which would be prejudicial to his honor or reputation.

Thus, moral rights, as set forth in the Berne Convention, consist of two separate rights. The first is the right of an author to claim authorship of his/her work, also known as the right of paternity. As will be discussed below, this right encompasses more than merely the affirmative right to be named as author. The second moral right is that of an author to prevent distortion, mutilation, or any other modification of a work that would be derogatory to the author's reputation, also referred to as the right of integrity.

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The U.S. Copyright Act does not expressly incorporate either of the moral rights. However, in a number of cases analogous protection has been afforded under other principles of United States law, and indeed, many Berne advocates argue that no change in the U.S. copyright law is required for the U.S. to join Berne.

★ RIGHT OF PATERNITY ★

Although the wording of the Berne moral rights provision quoted above speaks of the right to "claim authorship," a positive right, the right of paternity has generally been subdivided into three separate rights: (i) the right to claim authorship and prevent false authorship attribution to another person; (ii) the right to disclaim authorship (*i.e.*, to have the author's name deleted); and (iii) the right to prevent misattribution of authorship (*i.e.*, to prevent inaccurate description of the author's actual contribution).

No right of paternity is found in the U.S. Copyright Act. While an application for copyright registration must include the name of an author, this is not what is contemplated by the moral right to claim authorship, which is the right of the author to have his/her name used in conjunction with dissemination of the work to the public.

Various state statutes, including the New York Artists' Authorship Rights Act and the California Art Preservation Act, entitle an artist of a work of fine art to claim authorship even after the sale of the work and, for good cause, to disclaim authorship of the work. However, this right of paternity extends only to one limited area of the universe of copyrightable works—works of fine art—and has no application to any other artistic or literary works. A bill recently proposed in the Senate known as the Visual Artists Rights Act of 1987 (S. 1619), as well its counterpart House bill (H.R. 7352), would amend the U.S. Copyright Act to create a right of paternity with regard to works of fine art. Again, these bills, even if enacted, would not apply across-the-board but would create a limited, carved-out exception for one subset of creators—"fine artists."

Historically, a right of paternity has not been recognized in the case law. Decisions have held that when an author sells or licenses his/her work, the author does not have the inherent right to be credited as the author, unless he/she has specifically obtained such right in the contract. Indeed, it has been held that it is not an infringement of copyright for a licensee who has been authorized to reproduce the work to do so without including the author's name. Although in some cases general language appears to the effect that courts will protect against the omission of an author's name unless by contract he/she has waived such right, cases hold that unless the author has obtained the right to be credited by contract, the licensee will not be held liable for failure to do so. Thus, not only where an author expressly waives the right to receive credit but even where the agreement is silent as to credit, the cases have not upheld a right of the author to require such credit. For example, in a 1940s case, the co-writer of the story of a motion picture entitled *Brigham Young—Frontiersman*, who had transferred all of her rights in the story to Twentieth Century Fox without obtaining any right to credit, was unsuccessful in her suit against the motion picture company when it gave exclusive screen credit to her collaborator.

However, more recent developments suggest that a failure to credit authorship may violate Section 43(a) of the federal Lanham Act, the Trademark Act, which also prohibits false designations of origin and false representations. In a 1981 case, actor Paul Smith, who starred in an Italian film pursuant to a contract providing that he would receive star billing in the screen credits and in advertising, sued the U.S. distributors who released the film in this country under the name *Convoy Buddies* but removed Smith's name from both the film credits and advertising, substituting the name of another actor, Bob Spencer. Smith alleged that as a result his reputation as an actor had been damaged and that he had lost employment opportunities. A California federal appellate court upheld the right to bring a claim on the basis of a violation of Section 43(a) of the Lanham Act as a false designation of origin or false representation.

While the case deals with actors and not writers, its rationale should be equally applicable to writers, directors, and producers:

> Since actors' fees for pictures, and indeed, their ability to get any work at all, is often

based on the drawing power their name may be expected to have at the box office, being accurately credited for films in which they have played would seem to be of critical importance in enabling actors to sell their "services," i.e., their performances.

In fact, last year a court, relying on the *Smith* case, found a violation of Section 43(a) and enjoined a school district from publishing, allegedly without permission, a book which credited a school official as the author, where the book has been conceived by a journalism teacher and originally written by her students under her supervision.

It should be noted, however, that both of these cases present situations of express misrepresentation, *i.e.*, the substitution of the name of a different actor or author. They do not concern a mere absence of credit, which is an implied misrepresentation. Moreover, in the *Smith* case, there was a contractual obligation to accord credit. However, the rationale of these decisions would appear to cover implied as well as express misrepresentation.

There is a serious question about the precedential value of these decisions, however, since the same court that decided the *Smith* case now appears to have pulled the rug out from under it. In a 1987 case, the producer of the film *The Junkman*, an adventure film featuring spectacular automobile chases and collisions designed to appeal largely to teenagers and young adults, sued United Artists and various theaters for advertising the movie as "R" rated, indicating that the motion picture was unsuitable for children and young adults and that no one under the age of 18 should be admitted to watch it. Plaintiff claimed that the commercial success of the film was closely connected with a "PG" rating and that use of the "R" rating created disastrous box office consequences. While the court acknowledged that a logical extension of the *Smith* case could support the conclusion that the defendants violated Section 43(a) of the Lanham Act by making a false representation, the court held that the Lanham Act requires that, in order for there to be unfair competition, there must be actual competition between the parties. The court held that there was no competition between the plaintiff producer and the defendant distributor and exhibitors. As authors and actors are rarely competitors of producers, distributors, and exhibitors, this decision, if followed, would severely limit the availability of relief under the Lanham Act for a failure to credit.

Under the present law, it would thus appear that there is no clear legally defined right to authorship credit unless the author has expressly obtained such right under his/her contract. While a court might find that even without a clear credit provision there is an implied contractual obligation of good faith and fair dealing to properly accord authorship credit—since it is a common industry practice to attribute authorship, there is a public interest in knowing the name of the actual author, there is inherent unfairness in depriving an author of his or her credit, and a failure to credit suggests that the producer authored the work—apparently no case has as yet sustained liability on this basis.

Turning to the converse—the right of an author to prevent use of his/her name in connection with his/her work—as a general rule, an author may not object to the use of his/her name in connection with the work where such attribution is true, unless a contractual provision prohibits use of the author's name or gives the author the right to withdraw credit. Further, if truthful, a licensee may state that its work is based on the author's work. For example, in the 1940s, Margaret Landon, author of the book *Anna and the King of Siam*, sold motion picture rights to Twentieth Century Fox. In 1972, Fox produced a television series entitled *Anna and the King*, the credits of which stated that the scripts were "based on" Landon's book. The credit for the teleplay was given to the actual screenwriters in the same titles where Landon's name appeared. Landon challenged Fox's rights to produce the series and to use her name in the credits. The court held that pursuant to the rights agreement Fox was entitled to produce the television series and, further, that Fox was within its rights to state truthfully that, in fact, the series was based on her book.

The state statutes and the federal bills noted above concerning works of fine art generally provide that an artist retains the right to disclaim authorship for just and valid reason, including alteration or mutilation of the work without the artist's consent, after a sale of a work of fine art. As will be discussed concerning the right of integrity, the mutilation cases suggest that the use of an author's name in connection with a mutilated version of his/her work, such that the author's reputation will be injured, could constitute a violation of Section 43(a) of the Lanham Act.

The law has afforded protection to an author to prevent misattribution as to the nature or extent of authorship. It has been held that an author's rights are violated if, without his/her consent, he/she is named as author of a work which he/she did not in fact write. If the author's actual contribution is misrepresented, that is also a violation of rights. Author Ken Follett sued the publisher Arbor House concerning the book *The Gentlemen of 16 July*, where the publisher planned to attribute principal authorship of the work to Follett. The authorship credit was to read "by Ken Follett," in large type, followed by "with Rene Louis Maurice," a pseudonym of three French authors, in smaller type. In addition, only Follett's name would appear on the spine of the book. Follett claimed that such attribution was a false designation violating Section 43(a) of the Lanham Act. The court issued an injunction requiring that the authorship credit be changed to provide that it was written by Rene Louis Maurice, "with Ken Follett."

The original book, concerning a bank robbery in France and the apprehension and escape of one of the defendants, was written by the three French authors. The book was rewritten and edited by Follett. Although the court acknowledged that Follett's contribution was a substantial alteration—that the finished product bore the mark of his style and craftsmanship and evidenced more than a mere "edit" of the original version—Follett was not the principal author inasmuch as he worked from a fixed plot, cast of characters, theme, framework, format, and choice of material that had been furnished to him by the original authors. Thus, although Follett made authorship contributions, he was not the principal author and it was misleading to represent him as such.

A false representation of the nature of a performer's performance was also enjoined where internationally reputed jazz guitarist George Benson sued a record company which altered and rereleased an old recording on which Benson had been a minor musician. Years ago, when he was an unknown, Benson was hired as one of several musicians of a jazz combo to record music composed and directed by others. He had no control over the musical style, the content, or production of the original record. The defendant record company remixed the old recording, accenting Benson's guitar track in order to make him appear to be the lead guitarist, dubbed in sexually suggestive material, placed the legend "X Rated LP" on the album cover, and titled the album *George Benson, Erotic Moods*. Other cases also

In a 1940s case, the co-writer of the story of a motion picture entitled "Brigham Young—Frontiersman," who had transferred all of her rights in the story to Twentieth Century Fox without obtaining any right to credit, was unsuccessful in her suit against the motion picture company when it gave exclusive screen credit to her collaborator.

indicate that a false attribution of authorship can constitute unfair competition, invasion of privacy, and libel.

★ RIGHT OF INTEGRITY ★

The U.S. Copyright Act does not expressly recognize this aspect of moral rights, with the limited exception of compulsory licensing for phonograph recordings that prohibits a record producer from changing the basic melody or fundamental character of the musical work being recorded. Nevertheless, right of integrity might be read into the Copyright Act. One of the exclusive rights afforded to a copyright owner is the right to prepare derivative works. The statutory definition of "derivative work" includes "any form in which a work may be recast, transformed, or adapted." Arguably, a truncated or severely edited version of a work is an adaptation, requiring the permission of the copyright owner. However, no case appears to have as yet recognized this approach.

However, in a leading decision involving *Monty Python's Flying Circus* it was held that extensive unauthorized changes in television scripts that impaired their integrity constituted copyright infringement. In the case of *Gilliam v. ABC*, the *Monty Python* writers/performers sued ABC for unauthorized changes in a broadcast of their *Monty Python's Flying Circus* television programs. The plaintiffs had a contract with the British Broadcasting Corporation to produce their scripts that allowed the BBC to make only minor changes in the scripts without the plaintiffs' consent. There was no express right to alter the programs after they were recorded. Also, the plaintiffs retained all other rights in the scripts. The BBC then sublicensed U.S. television rights to a distributor which licensed ABC the right to do a 90-minute special comprised of three 30-minute episodes. ABC deleted 24 minutes from the programs, both for the purpose of inserting commercials and for deleting what it considered offensive or inappropriate matter. This deletion amounted to 27 percent of the programming. The plaintiffs claimed that such extensive mutilation impaired the integrity of the programs and their reputation.

The court stated that the U.S. copyright law does not recognize moral rights: "American copyright law, as presently written, does not recognize moral rights or provide a cause of action for their violation, since the law seeks to vindicate the economic, rather than the personal, rights of authors." It held, however, that where a licensee makes changes in the work beyond the rights granted under the contract of such magnitude so as to significantly alter the work, such conduct is an infringement of copyright. The court was careful to caution that not all editing would constitute copyright infringement and that a licensee is afforded some degree of latitude in editing a work for presentation in a manner consistent with its style or standards.

It is important to note that the court's finding of copyright infringement was premised on its interpretation of the contract. Cases have held that an author can contract away the right to approve changes in his/her work. Indeed, it has even been held that this right can be implied under certain circumstances. For example, Otto Preminger, the producer and director of the film *Anatomy of a Murder*, who had granted motion picture and television rights to Columbia Pictures, sought to enjoin television exhibition with minor cuts for insertion of commercial breaks. Preminger claimed that any such deletions would detract from the artistic merit of the film, destroy its value, and damage his reputation. Under Preminger's contract, he reserved the right of final cut. There was no reference in the contract to any cutting or editing regarding television exhibition. The court ruled that Preminger's editing rights were limited to the original film and did not encompass television. Without any contractual provision regarding television, the court ruled that the parties implicitly incorporated the custom prevailing in the industry. The court found that the term "final cut" related only to the production phase of a film and not to television and that, with regard to television exhibition, it was normal and customary in the industry to make minor deletions in theatrical films both to accommodate time constraints and to insert commercials. The court also found that both parties were aware of the standard practice and the contract did not restrict it. The court did opine, however, that substantial cutting of a film might be improper.

The *Monty Python* case also found a second basis for liability—violation of Section 43(a) of the Lanham Act. The court stated, "[T]he edited version broadcast by ABC impaired the integrity of appellants' work and represented to the public as a product of appellants what was actually a mere caricature of their talents." A Section 43(a) claim based on mutilation was also held to state a good cause of action in a suit arising from the alleged garbling and distortion contained in the English language version of the German film *Kamasutra*. The co-author and director of the film claimed that major parts of the picture as originally produced in Germany were eliminated in the U.S. version, and a segment of approximately 25 minutes had been inserted without permission, resulting in gross distortion and mutilation of the screenplay.

The reader should note the convergence between that aspect of the right of paternity relating to the right of an author to disclaim authorship of an altered version of his/her work and the right of integrity where the association between the author and the mutilated version is allegedly damaging to his/her reputation.

The *Kamasutra* court also refused to dismiss a claim of invasion of the right of privacy as another basis to sue. Other legal bases that may be employed to prevent mutilation include unfair competition, libel, and breach of contract. In an old case, a court refused to dismiss a claim of unfair competition brought by Olive Higgins Prouty, author of the novel *Stella Dallas*, against NBC for broadcast of radio skits using characters from the novel which Prouty alleged were of inferior artistic and commercial quality, deleterious to her reputation and the sale of her works. In a more recent case,

In a 1981 case, actor Paul Smith, who starred in an Italian film pursuant to a contract providing that he would receive star billing in the screen credits and in advertising, sued the U.S. distributors who released the film in this country under the name "Convoy Buddies" but removed Smith's name from both the film credits and advertising, substituting the name of another actor, Bob Spencer.... A California federal appellate court upheld the right to bring a claim on the basis of a violation of Section 43(a) of the Lanham Act—the Trademark Act—as a false designation of origin or false representation.

the author of an article on Barbara Walters who had granted the publisher a right to edit claimed that the magazine published an article substantially different in form and content and damaged his reputation. The court stated that although moral rights were not part of the U.S. copyright law, the author had properly pleaded causes of action for libel and breach of contract. The state fine arts laws and the proposed federal fine arts law noted above also generally proscribe distortion, mutilation, or alteration of such works.

The state of the law with regard to both aspects of moral rights—paternity and integrity—points to the importance of contractual language. Where the contract clearly covers rights of credit and editing, these provisions will be enforced by the courts. Indeed, cases state that theories analogous to moral rights are superseded by the agreement of the parties as reflected in their contract. It is where the contracts are ambiguous or silent that the courts may (or may not) insert legal theories to fill the gaps.

Independent film/videomakers must give consideration to these issues from two perspectives: first, as the acquiring party in agreements with underlying rights owners, screenwriters, composers, and directors; and second, as the granting party in agreements with studios and distributors. A film/videomaker must establish the respective credit and approval rights of the screenwriter, composer, and director he/she engages as well as the underlying rights owner of materials he/she is purchasing, keeping in mind that these rights must be acceptable to a prospective studio or distributor. The film/videomaker's own credit and approval rights must be established vis-à-vis the acquiring party. Film/videomakers should give thought to covering these points in the prevalently used deal memo, which is usually a summary of key provisions but often either does not cover, or fully flesh out, moral rights issues, in contrast to more thorough long form contracts. In many cases, a deal memo is not followed by a long form contract, so that the deal memo will represent the actual, and only, agreement of the parties.

Contrary moral rights positions of directors and owners of motion pictures recently surfaced with respect to the issue of colorization of films, whereby black and white films are redone in color by means of computer technology. Directors have objected to this process as a distortion of films that fundamentally changes their artistic quality. A bill was introduced in the House, known as the Film Integrity Act of 1987, which would prohibit colorization of films without the written consent of the artistic authors. Senate hearings were held in 1987 where the Directors Guild and prominent directors Sydney Pollack, Woody Allen, and Milos Forman testified against film colorization. In recent hearings concerning Berne Convention legislation Steven Spielberg and George Lucas cited the colorization issue as an example of why an express moral rights provision should be added to the U.S. Copyright Act to protect writers, directors, and artists. Production companies and colorizing companies argued that they should be allowed to take advantage of new technology, that the old films would still be available in their original black and white form, that the original films were not solely the end product of the directors' creativity, and that colorized versions would promote greater dissemination of the works, allowing the public to make its own choice about which version it preferred. In the interim, in June of 1987, the Copyright Office issued regulations permitting the registration of colorized versions of films.

★ ★ ★

Having reviewed the status of moral rights under U.S. law, we can now return to the Berne Convention and the question of U.S. adherence. Four bills have been introduced in Congress that would amend the Copyright Act and enable the U.S. to join the Berne Convention.

Three bills—H.R. 2962, S. 1301, and S. 1971—would not incorporate any moral rights provisions in the Copyright Act. Advocates of these bills maintain that the totality of alternative legal theories as discussed above afford sufficient moral rights protection and satisfy the Berne requirements. Proponents of this approach further argue that, although the Berne moral rights provision speaks of safeguarding moral rights by "legislation," judicial decisions are an adequate substitute for federal legislation.

Only one bill, H.R. 1623, would expressly legislate a right of paternity and a right of integrity as part of the Copyright Act. Proponents of this approach argue that the amalgam of law concerning moral rights issues does not clearly define the availability or extent of protection, lacks uniformity and predictability, and is not sufficiently protective of the interests of authors. However, even the lone bill supporting express recognition of moral rights contains three important limitations (or loopholes) of interest to film/videomakers which hinge on contract language. First, moral rights would not apply to works made for hire. A work made for hire is either a work prepared by an employee within the scope of his/her employment or a work specially ordered or commissioned for use as part of certain categories of works, including motion pictures, provided that the parties agree in writing that it is to be considered a work made for hire. Screenwriters and directors are customarily engaged on an employment for hire basis. There is a question whether this employment for hire exception, which would denude the natural author or creator of his/her moral rights, is consistent with the general principles of the Berne Convention.

Second, H.R. 1623 would provide that moral rights can be waived by contract. In situations where the acquiring party has superior bargaining power, the granting party may be forced to contract these rights away. Clauses similar to the following are commonly found in motion picture related agreements: "Producer shall have the right to adapt, edit, cut, augment, or combine with other materials, translate, dub and otherwise alter the film, and grantor hereby waives any right of 'droit moral' or similar right." There is some dispute about whether the language of the Berne provision would permit such waiver. (Such question also remains under the present state of the law, which permits contractual waiver.)

Third, this bill would provide the following limitation on moral rights:

> In the absence of a contract to the contrary, or notice by the author of a work at the time the author consents to the use of the work, the necessary editing, arranging, or adaptation of the work for publication or use in printed or machine-readable form, in broadcasting, in motion pictures, or in phonorecords, in accordance with customary standards and reasonable requirements of preparing the work for dissemination, shall not constitute an infringement of any of an author's moral rights.

Unless the contract expressly excludes it, a work could be edited and adapted in accordance with customary industry standards.

Congressional hearings were held in 1987 and in February and March of this year. The entertainment industry has been divided on the issue of adherence to Berne and moral rights. While motion picture interests, including the Motion Picture Association of America, have generally been in favor of adherence to Berne, the various parties do not fully agree on moral rights. Generally, writers and directors have favored the approach of clearly incorporating moral rights as part of the copyright law, while motion picture owners and production companies have advocated the "minimalist" approach of relying on the present body of U.S. law. Representative Robert Kastenmeier (D-Wisconsin), who introduced the sole Berne bill that would expressly legislate a moral rights provision, has recently indicated that he now favors the "minimalist" approach and has introduced an amendment to his own bill deleting the moral rights clause. It now appears that if Berne implementation legislation is passed, which is likely, there will be no moral rights provision added to the Copyright Act.

For independent film/videomakers, the importance of covering moral rights issues in contracts cannot be overemphasized. If a Berne bill does not pass, or if the "minimalist" approach is enacted, the present status of the law, which is principally influenced by the agreement reached between the parties, will govern. Prudence dictates upfront consensual resolution of these points by contract in order to avoid later disputes and possible litigation.

Robert C. Harris is an attorney with the New York City firm of Leavy Rosensweig & Hyman, which specializes in entertainment and copyright law and represents independent film producers.

1988 Robert C. Harris

BEVERLY HILLS SWAP: THE 1988 AMERICAN FILM MARKET



Step this way to the 1988 American Feature Market. AFM offered everthing from slasher movies to foreign prestige product in the hotel rooms and suites of the Beverly Hills Hilton, rented for the occasion by film producers and distributors from around the world.

Courtesy Dennis Davidson Associates

Noreen Ash Mackay

Ms. Sex and Mr. Violence celebrated their union in an explosion of horror movies at the American Film Market '88, held at the Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills. Dapper delegates from all over the world came to register their respect and get their tickets to the Ride of Terror, which took up five floors of the hotel. Before embarking on the elevator, I took refuge in what became a sepulchre of sanity, a circle of astro turf open to Hollywood's blue sky where I sat at a table between a fountain and a semi-circle buffet of cold cuts, salads, fruit, and deserts. Having gathered one of each of the myriad press kits being handed out, I had a coffee and waded through the special editions of the *Hollywood Reporter* and *Screen International*, as well as the three-inch thick issue of *Variety* that accompanies such meets as this. In all, I encountered hundreds of full page ads for films on sale at the AFM, announcing what awaited me upstairs.

All the hotel rooms and suites—for which "sellers" in occupancy had paid $3,500 to $18,500, in addition to a hefty $4,000 participation fee for non-members of the American Film Market Association (AFMA members were charged $2,000 for participation, but they also pay $5,000 to join and $3,000 annual dues)—left their doors open onto the darkened hallways. From each a television set exuded excruciating distortions of sound and chiaroscuro color at the passing audience. Although the word at AFM was that the number of "horror genre" pictures has greatly decreased from "one-third of all product presented," most of the examples in the other dominant categories of "drama" and "action-adventure" fit just as snugly under the heading "horrific."

Was there anything worthwhile at AFM '88? Yes. The official statement from AFM director Tim Kittleson was, "There is a lot more class in this year's selection." Cineplex Odeon boasted *The Glass Menagerie*, directed by Paul Newman, Shirley MacLaine in *Madame Sousatzka*, and *Prince: Sign o' the Times*. In another suite (and juxtaposed in a two page spread of *Daily Variety*), J&M Entertainment presented Diane Keaton in *The Lemon Sisters* alongside *The Return of the Swamp Thing* as well as already established titles like *Ironweed*. Quality was evident in many of the films from foreign contingents. The Japanese company Shochiku was on hand with *Hachi-Ko*, a film that features the love between a dog and its master. The French UGC Export showed Claude Chabrol's *Alouette, Je Te Plumeria*. Their promo package for *Les Annees Sandwiches* describes a film "without sex or violence, without cops, drugs...the story deals with what counts most in life." And Cine International was on hand with a film by Werner Herzog featuring Klaus Kinski as *Cobra Verde*.

Claudie Cheval, a rep for Futura Films also from West Germany, discussed the reasons behind showing quality or specialty films at AFM. She believes that the importance of the American Film Market is its chronological proximity to the Berlin Film Festival. "It's a continuation. We finalize here what we negotiated in Berlin." She cited, in particular, the award-winning Island Pictures release *Baghdad Cafe*, a surrealistic, sophisticated satire. She believes, as does Roger Vadim—with whom I spoke at the Monterey Festival and who was showing his remake of *And God Created Woman* at AFM—that English (or "Americanese") is the international language of film. "It gives more commercial possibilities in more territories."

Several filmmakers present at AFM but too "independent"—that is, too poor—to be exhibiting are aware of the compromises that such state-

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ments imply and are prepared to make it by producing exploitation movies. However, Laurence Keane of Utopia Pictures believes that making and showing his high quality, good-looking movie *Samuel Lount* will give him more credibility as a serious filmmaker than making an exploitation film. He was at the AFM with a promo package for his latest venture, *Weirdos*, a sci-fi "metaphysical" comedy. "There is no value in doing anything you don't believe in, but a film should be something that answers to the marketplace, a balance of art and commerce," he said. Keane and his producer/partner Elvira Lount conducted most of their business in the hotel lobby, since they didn't want to fork out $500 for a visitor's badge and security measures taken at AFM are very rigorous. Lount sees AFM, along with the other major markets like MIP-TV in Cannes, MIFED in Milan, Montreal, Berlin, and Banff, as the best places to make contacts. Before leaving AFM, Utopia received an offer from a banker whom Lount and Keane "met in Cannes and ran into in the lobby." It is important to "become a face, someone they know is going to be around, a survivor. This gives you credibility, you're taken seriously," Lount said. And she listed the companies on the commercial end of specialty and quality films: Spectra, Skouras, Hemdale, Vestron, Vidmark, and Hand Made as companies that take more risks.

Hand Made's director of foreign sales in the U.S. George Ayoub reckons, "The AFM is the best and worst experience for an independent filmmaker." He maintains there are new markets opening up for quality films in the Far East and South America, and that the AFM is the worst place to present a project. "Developmental people don't come here, it's a business market interested in selling. They're too busy to talk. But you can learn, meet your peers, hear about what other people are up to. You can get the nod here, but the ink's not going to dry on the paper."

Much discussion at AFM is not geared directly towards struggling independents but might nevertheless bear attention. The first Roundtable Discussion of AFM '88 was "Whither Wall Street? The Prospect of Motion Picture Financing since the October Crash." Harvey Weinstein of Miramax observed that, in the short term, the financial woes of Wall Street will hurt everyone, but the long haul will separate the strong from the struggling. "Miramax is in an expansion mode, and we're looking to co-finance with international filmmakers." The second AFM Roundtable was "How Will Satellite Transmission Impact the International Market?" The consensus on all counts was that the devalued dollar creates a more affordable U.S. product for foreign buyers. Another area of primary concern to market-goers was video piracy. William Shields, American Film Market Association chair, named this and the ongoing campaign to curb these practices as a major issue facing those attending the market. Jonas Rosenfield, president of AFMA, chaired a meeting where representatives of major industry associations agreed to create a "carnet de passage," a film passport, to counter the use of forged contracts and licenses.

At the press conference for the director of China's Film Bureau and officials of the China Film Import and Export, many a mouth watered with the prospect of a billion Chinese potential VCR owners. A more valuable press conference for independent producers was that given by Alexander Kamshalov, chair of Goskino—the government agency for the motion picture and home video industry in the USSR. He announced, "Russians have come to the U.S. screens and have no intention to leave," adding that the parallel situation now exists for U.S. films in his country. He voiced an interest in coproductions and named several already underway, encouraging filmmakers to make direct contact should they have projects which they felt would be appropriate. He said, "There are no films left on the shelf [a metaphorical place for banned films] and no forbidden subject." But, he added, the Soviets are mainly interested in documentaries—"the first films that reflect our *perestroika* policy and we would like to see them on American TV."

The Location Expo, held concurrently with AFM, is very valuable to all filmmakers. On the ground floor of the Beverly Hilton most U.S. state film commissions and many of their Canadian counterparts had stalls where they distributed maps as well as information on rebates and accommodation breaks and their scouting services for filmmakers. Maggie Christie, associate director of AFM, spoke about the phenomenon of state governments' awareness of the tremendous revenues that film productions can generate: "The role of the filmmaker is to show the world to the world. The viewer is likely to want to go there on the next vacation. The film commissions have become associated with tourist boards. You tell them what you want, and they'll find it."

There are new plans afoot to hold a second AFM in Los Angeles in the fall. The fees for attending two events such as AFM every year may be steep by independent standards, but there is something to be said for immersion in the belly of the beast, where, even from the sidelines, familiarity with the movie trade may prove useful.

Noreen Ash Mackay is currently finishing a documentary and teaches documentary filmmaking in New York City.

WHERE THE ACTION WAS: AMERICAN INDEPENDENTS IN BERLIN

Kathryn Bowser

Internationally recognized as one of the world's major and most influential festivals, the Berlin Film Festival premieres over 400 films from 40 countries each year, with an emphasis on avant-garde, noncommercial, and other independently produced films. For independent producers, it provides an electric atmosphere of high visibility and critical reception. Each year a large number of U.S. independent film- and videomakers have journeyed to Berlin with work covering the spectrum from features to documentaries to shorts. The festival's concurrent market is a massive venue, where over 7,000 accredited film industry and press representatives meet to screen new work and negotiate deals. Berlin has the world's second largest festival market after Cannes, and has generally been regarded as the market venue most amenable to U.S. independent films.

Confronted with the high-power sales pitches of various foreign national film organizations—ads in *Variety* and the *FilmFest Journal*, booths with large amounts of glossy paper, promotional parties, and so forth—U.S. independents at the festival had no comparable base from which to market their films. In 1986, with these facts in mind, Lynda Hansen, director of the Artists New Works Program at the New York Foundation for the Arts, attended the festival to negotiate with festival organizers for U.S. representation in the market. While there, she encountered Robert Aaronson, then the Foundation for Independent Video and Film's Festival Bureau director, and proposed that NYFA and FIVF work together on a coordinated effort to set up a structure for repping U.S. independent work at the festival. Hansen was interested in providing a support for the filmmakers whose work premiered there and encouraging coproduction agreements, distribution deals, and the exchange of ideas between the U.S. filmmakers and the international film community.

Earlier in the festival's history, independent filmmaker Jon Jost set up a booth called Association for Unassociated Filmmakers in 1980. The booth was established to represent three filmmakers—not all from the U.S.—and it was spontaneously enlarged to serve about 12 people who joined during the festival. Jost subsequently

organized a similar booth with about 30 filmmakers from around the world for the next two festivals. In 1983-84 the Independent Feature Project initiated a U.S. independent booth in Berlin, but later refocused its attention on Cannes, which resulted in Le Salon du Cinéma Indépendent at the 1986 Cannes Film Festival.

In the summer of 1986 Hansen and Aaronson met with festival codirector Moritz de Hadeln, and he gave the go-ahead to NYFA and FIVF. He agreed to provide a small booth and some in-kind contributions to get it underway. Together with other festival personnel as collaborators, the concept of a NYFA/FIVF booth took shape as a consortium with four other organizations participating. Following the announcement of the project, however, the response from filmmakers and organizations was so strong that the idea quickly mushroomed into a nationwide network of 26 organizations supporting 30 festival filmmakers as well as a mechanism to support international coproductions and distribution of films at the 1987 festival. The 1987 American Independents in Berlin (AIB) initiative resulted in a strong network of support for the U.S. independent filmmakers at the festival. Market screenings of festival films for producers, distributors, and exhibitors were organized, and a full-scale advertising and publicity campaigns for the project was launched.

This year AIB expanded considerably—coordinated by Hansen, her assistant at NYFA Lisa Overton, and me. The consortium grew to 35 organizations, and a new component was added: 19 non-festival feature films were represented in the market by AIB, giving international exposure to filmmakers not included in the festival's selections. With the nearly 30 festival films selected for the Panorama and International Forum sections (14 of which were also scheduled in the market), as well as the 19 non-festival market films, AIB represented the greatest number of entries from a single country. The booth provided a base for this diverse group, whose films spanned the range from very low budget ($5,000) to several million dollars. Market director Beki Probst noted, "The echo is very positive.... We're glad they were present with such an important package."

"The market booth provided a home base and was extremely useful in making information about my film *Missile* available and in running a professional screening," said Frederick Wiseman, whose film was scheduled in the Panorama and the market. IFP's Karen Arikian concurred on the importance of the booth, commenting that there was "a feeling of community that the AIB developed that is very special." Robert Stone, whose *Radio Bikini* was booked into the market (and received an Academy Award nomination during the course of the festival), thought that the booth was invaluable and that navigating the festival "would have been a nightmare without it." Jennifer Fox, whose *Beirut: The Last Home Movie* was selected for the Forum, agreed that the booth was "absolutely vital. It provided a meeting

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The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers



Americans in Berlin booth organizers Kathryn Bowser of FIVF (seated left) and Lynda Hansen of NYFA (seated right), backed by filmmakers (from left) Mark Daniels, Andrew Horn, Jon Jost, Alan Francovich, and Peter Ily Huemer.

place, a place to meet other filmmakers." Loni Ding, whose documentary film *The Color of Honor* was booked in the market, commented on the amount of activity at the booth. "Even if you were not American", she said, "you had to go to the booth. People clustered around it like moths around light. It was the liveliest booth, extremely friendly and helpful, and the center of attention not only for us, but also for other countries."

Phil Zwickler, who codirected *Rights and Reactions: Lesbian and Gay Rights on Trial* with Jane Lippman, noted that the booth was especially important for new filmmakers unfamiliar with the layout of the festival, providing them with a place to leave and receive messages and get the information necessary for contacts and meetings. Gerald L'Ecuyer, whose short *The Critical Years* was programmed in the Panorama, found that the market atmosphere was weighted in favor of features and that short filmmakers had to work especially hard. He advised short filmmakers to brace themselves for an arena geared to features and to come prepared with plenty of publicity materials and an eagerness to do a lot of self-promotion.

AIB's purpose at the festival was to generate, as a group, the information, publicity, opportunities, and energy that are impossible to achieve individually. Hundreds of posters and glossy, illustrated catalogues containing descriptions of consortium members and films were distributed. Flyers, posters, and press kits were displayed, and full-page advertisements in *Variety* and the *Berlin Film Festival Journal* complemented these publicity materials. Booth representatives attended each market screening, keeping records on attendees and passing this information to the filmmakers for follow-up.

A press conference on the participations consortium organizations was held by the festival. AIB arranged for Joy Pereths of the International Film Exchange to meet with the filmmakers and to provide them with a general introduction to the market. In addition, AIB's arrangement with the United States Information Agency for the shipping of market prints saved individual filmmakers hundreds of dollars.

Several on-the-spot sales took place. Peter Ily Huemer, director of *Kiss Daddy Goodnight*, sold theatrical rights and an option for television and video to Kinowelt (Germany), Japanese video rights to Kuzui, television rights to Yugoslavia, video rights in Brazil, and Italian theatrical rights to Academy. Jennifer Fox received Indian, Dutch, and Finnish television offers, closed a deal with a French distributor for television and theatrical rights in France, and lined up numerous festival venues. Ken Ausubel, director of *Hoxsey: Quacks Who Cure Cancer?*, signed a contract with Bravo for U.S. cable rights, and his European distributor is negotiating offers from England, France, and Ireland. Stone sold theatrical rights for *Radio Bikini* to Austria and theatrical and television sales to Finland and Switzerland.

In addition to the films mentioned, participating filmmakers included:

(in the Forum) *Bell Diamond* and *Plain Talk and Common Sense (Uncommon Senses)*, by Jon Jost; *The Big Blue*, by Andrew Horn; *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years 1954-1965*, by Henry Hampton; *The Houses Are Full of Smoke*, by Alan Francovich; *Signed: Lino Brocka*, by Christian Blackwood; (in the Panorama) *AIDS and the Arts*, by Lee Koromvokis; *Dream City*, by Steven Siegel; *Hairspray*, by John Waters; *Haiti: Dreams of Democracy*, by Jonathan Demme; *Imagine* and *Steps*, by Zbigniew Rybczynski; *In the Land of the Owl Turds*, by Harrod Blank; *Infermental 7*, a video program from Hallwalls Arts Center; *Inheritance*, by Bill Donovan; *Landlord Blues*, by Jacob Burckhardt; *Legacy of the Hollywood Blacklist*, by Judy Chaikin; *No Sense of Crime*, by Julie Jacobs; *Paradise Bar*, by Christian von Tippelskirch; *Rachel River*, by Sandy Smolan; *Sign o' the Times*, by Prince; *Talking to Strangers*, by Robert Tregenza; *Urge*, by Billy Lux; (in the Market) *Astonished*, by Jeff Kahn and Travis Preston; *Blueberry Hill*, by Strathford Hamilton; *Border Radio*, by Allison Anders, Kurt Voss, and Dean Lent; *Fire from the Mountain*, by Deborah Shaffer; *Girltalk*, by Kate Davis; *Heat and Sunlight*, by Rob Nilsson; *A Hungry Feeling: The Life and Death of Brendan Behan*, by Allan Miller; *The Influence of Strangers (genealogy)*, by Mark Daniels; *King James Version*, by Robert Gardner; *Mondo New York*, by Harvey Keith; *She Must Be Seeing Things*, by Sheila McLaughlin; *Suicide Club*, by James Bruce; *Sweet Lorraine*, by Steve Gomer; and *Three Bewildered People in the Night*, by Gregg Araki. Costs for the effort were covered by the participating organizations and filmmakers, and individual and corporate sponsors, including George Gund, Angelika Films, American Playhouse, TVC Labs, Fox/Lorber Associates, and Filmtext (The Hague).

Based on its successes at the festival and the overwhelmingly positive response from filmmakers and buyers alike, AIB organizers are now considering similar ventures in other major international markets.

IN BRIEF

The "In Brief" listings are compiled by Kathryn Bowser, director of **FIVF's Festival Bureau**. Listings do not constitute an endorsement & since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

BLACKLIGHT: A FESTIVAL OF BLACK INT'L CINEMA, Jul. 28-Aug. 7, IL. Since 1982 this noncompetitive fest has programmed series of recent int'l independent productions focusing on the black experience: works by black producers or films that present black subject matter in interesting or unusual forms. It brings together works by indie black filmmakers from US, Africa, South Pacific & Europe. Its "Views From Outside: The Black Image in Int'l Cinema" has shown works from England, Japan, France & Brazil. This will be founder Floyd Webb's last yr as director of the fest & he plans retrospective of the work of Souleymane Cisse & program of feature films from Burkino Faso. Short films by new black independent filmmakers are welcomed. Program held in conjunction with Film Center of Art Institute of Chicago & DuSable Museum of African History. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S-8, special video section. Contact: Floyd Webb, Blacklight, 53 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 343, Chicago, IL 60604; (312) 922-7771.

INTERCOM INDUSTRIAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, October, IL. Oldest national fest accepting sponsored industrial productions, now in 24th yr. Organized by Cinema Chicago, which also produces Chicago Film Festival. Entries accepted in 8 competitive subject cats & over 35 sub-cats encompassing such areas as sales, PR, training, human relations, counselling, sciences & fundraising. 150 industry professionals act as judges, awarding Gold & Silver Hugos to top productions in each cat, film & video; gold & silver plaques & certificates of merit also awarded. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Fees: $85 film, $80 video. Deadline: May 30. Contact: Intercom, 415 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 644-3400; telex 253655.

MILL VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 6-13, CA. Entering 2nd decade as dependable venue for exhibition of all varieties of independent work from throughout the world, with particular emphasis on US films & videos. Last yr theme was social justice, w/ docs & features as well as tributes & seminars centering on theme. Program incl. salute to US independents, Les Blank & Hemdale Film & featured several world premieres of US & foreign films.This yr, video section will be part of the program. Deadline: June 30. Contact: Mark Fishkin, artistic director, Mill Valley Film Festival & Videofest, 80 Lomita Dr., Suite 20, Mill Valley, CA 94941; (415) 383-5256.

NEW YORK FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 23-Oct. 9, NY. Presented for 26th yr by Film Society of Lincoln Center, this respected fest has served throughout its history as a launching point for successful release of many int'l films. Many also celebrate their world premieres during fest, which engenders wide public participation & re-

Books and PUBLICATIONS

Independent Feature Film Production Goodell $9.95
Legal structure and financing, the pre-production package, the production process, post-production distribution and marketing, and samples of limited partnership agreements and budgets.

The Independent Film and Videomakers Guide Wiese $16.95
Advice on film and video financing, investor presentations and limited partnerships. Writing a prospectus, market research, finding distributors, negotiating, income projections, list of buyers of non-theatre films, pay and foreign tv, and home video, contacts for music video.

Film and Video Budgets Wiese $16.95
How to prepare budgets for low budget features, commercials, shorts, music videos, pay tv segments. Sample budgets, practical advice and money saving tips.

Home Video: Producing for the Home Market Wiese $16.95
Advice on the successful development and distribution of original home video programs. New marketing opportunities for independent producers.

The Copyright Primer for Film and Video Sparkman $3.50
Practical copyright information, what does or doesn't need a copyright, registration procedure, exceptions and a sample release.

Selected Issues in Media Law Mayer $2.50
Legal information on copyrights, option agreements, distribution contracts and a glossary of legal terms.

Ship Shape Shipping Lidell $3.00
Practical advice on international transport of film and video tapes.

Get the Money and Shoot Jackson $20.00
How to obtain government, corporate and foundation grants, how to write a proposal, and budgets. Film production from start to finish. Reading list.

Before You Shoot Garvy $10.00
Decision making and organizing for the production side of filmmaking.

Sponsors: A Guide for Video and Filmmakers
Goldman/Green $6.00
Ways to identify potential sponsors, tax implications, advantages and disadvantages, establishing good working relationships, sample letters of agreement, list of media service organizations, and bibliography.

Producer's Masterguide '87 $15.00
An eighty dollar value!

AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals
Aaronson $15.00
Compilation of two years of festival columns published in The Independent. Over three hundred festivals in the US and abroad. Complete profiles, contacts and fees. Photocopy.

AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals
Bowser $19.50
The new 1988 up to date edition of the Festival Guide. Soon to be published. Pre-orders are being taken now! Postage and handling included.

Doing It Yourself: A Handbook on Independent Film Distribution
Reichert/Rothschild $6.00
The nuts and bolts of self distribution. Topics include promotion, types of costs, bookings, running an office, and more. Photocopy.

AIVF Guide to Film and Video Distributors Guzzy/Lidell $6.00
Profiles one hundred distribution companies. Indexed for genre/subjects, market (and foreign) target audiences, and companies that provide completion funding. Photocopy.

Back issues of **The Independent** $3.00
(includes postage and handling)

Audio CASSETTES



AIVF is proud to announce its new audio tape series. These are actual live recordings of our seminars with no holds barred. Audience questions to the panel are included also. In the coming months, new recordings will be available on topics of vital importance to the independent, from aesthetics to business concerns.

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Festival Circuit Confidential $12.00 (2 tapes)
The international film and video circuit is an important entry point for independents into foreign markets. This taped seminar brings together professionals familiar with international festivals and trends in overseas marketing options. A great companion to the AIVF Festival Guide!

Docs to Drama $12.00 (2 tapes)
Why are many documentarians switching to dramatic works? Producers discuss the aesthetic and practical challenges of "crossing over"

Send check or money order, or charge to your Mastercard or Visa, along with $2.00 postage and handling, $1.00 per additional item for all publications. All cassette prices include postage and handling. AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10012



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sponse. Last yr 99% of tickets sold out before opening. Program committee this yr chaired by Richard Peña, formerly director of Film Center at the School of Chicago's Art Institute & now program director of LC Film Society. Other members incl. Wendy Keys of the Film Society; Carrie Rickey, film critic; David Sterritt, film critic & chair of New York Film Critics' Circle & Philip Lopate, film critic & programmer. Lillian Jimenez to be consultant for US independent films. Final selection for program is 25 films, selected from dramatic, documentary, animated, short & experimental entries shown at other festivals during preceding yr or outstanding new productions. Entries must be US premieres w/ no prior public, theatrical, or commercial exhibition or distribution. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on 3/4". Deadlines: feature length films submitted on cassette, mid-June; feature length films submitted on film, early July; shorts (under 30 mins.), mid-July. Request applications & exact deadline dates in mid-May. Contact: Marian Masone, Film Society of Lincoln Center,140 W. 65th St., New York, NY 10023; (212) 877-1800.

Robert Flaherty Film Seminar. Aug. 13-20, NY. Every yr film & videomakers from around the world retreat to the campus of Wells College in Aurora, NY, to debate & examine issues of filmmaking, specifically screening films & videos which "have reached out to touch the human spirit" & challenging the makers on the nature of their work. This is 34th yr. All films & tapes are selected by a different programmer each yr.; this role will be played by Julie Levinson, Institute of Contemporary Art, 955 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02115 for the '88 seminar. Write before submission. Material must not be sent w/out prior clearance from programmer. Deadline for completion of selection: June 1. Seminar registration is open to all w/ professional interest in the field. Fee $550, incl. registration, housing, meals & materials. Participants expected to attend entire event. Some financial assistance available, up to $400 (deadline May 15 for assistance appl.). For all info. contact: Esme I. Dick, administrative director, Robert Flaherty Seminar, 44 W. 56th St., 3d fl., New York, NY 10019; (212) 582-0273/(203) 869-0445.

FOREIGN

Cork Int'l Film Festival. Oct. 2-10, Ireland. Now in 33rd yr, FIAF-recognized fest is very receptive to programming "wide panorama" of independent films from US & elsewhere. Last yr nearly 30 US independents represented. Noncompetitive, this is very much a film buff's event & screens films which otherwise might not be seen in Ireland. Last yr featured experimental film showcase from sister city San Francisco, as well as program of works by US film/videomaker Doris Chase. Fest programs wide range—features, documentaries, shorts, experimental, animation & student. Special video section recently added & fest aims to get "the mixture right, between the rough-edged & the glossy, the high-budget & the no-budget." Work must have been completed in 12 prior mos. Deadline: late July. Contact: Michael Hannigan/Theo Dorgan, codirectors, Cork Int'l Film Festival, Triskel Arts Center, Tobin Street, Cork, Ireland; tel: (021) 271711/275944; telex 75390.

Kijkhuis World Wide Video Festival, September, The Hague. Major showcase for int'l independent video, 8 day fest last yr received over 1,400 entries from 50 countries, from which 94 works by 86 artists were selected; 10 were world premieres & most were Dutch premieres. Length of work varies from 5-160 mins. The program takes place at several locations in the Hague & works are broadcast on local cable channels in the Hague, Wassenaar, Voorburg, Delft, Rotterdam & Groningen. Program last yr incl. installations & video performance. Int'l jury awards 3 prizes of 2,500 Dutch guilders ($1,190) each (for Dutch premieres), sponsored by the Hague, Sony & Canon Europe. This is 7th yr & fest has established a reputation as major meeting place for videomakers, producers & distributors. All types of video art & docs accepted. Format: 3/4". Deadline: late June. Call or write before sending entries. Contact: Tom Van Vliet/Eric Quint, World Wide Video Festival, Noordeinde 140, 2514 GP Den Haag, Netherlands; tel (070) 644805.

Midnight Sun Film Festival. June 16-20, Finland. Held in Sodankyla, a small community 200 miles north of the Arctic Circle in Lapland, this noncompetitive fest consists of "films by a few great masters who attend the festival as honorary guests" with retros of their films; past honorees have included Jim Jarmusch, Jonathan Demme, Juliet Berto, D.A. Pennebaker, Jeanne-Pierre Gorin, Tom Luddy & Bertrand Tavernier, who have led lectures & discussions. One fest auditorium is huge circus tent & screenings are held around the clock. Large local audience assured since cinema is only exhibition facility within a 400-mile radius. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Contact: Peter von Bagh, director, Midnight Sun Film Festival, Minna Canthin katu 20, 00250 Helsinki, Finland; tel: (358) 0410294.

Sao Paulo Int'l Film Festival, Oct. 15-31, Brazil. With focus on independent & unconventional films, noncompetitive fest has featured growing number of US alternative feature & doc films during 12 yr run & has, according to *Variety*, become one of the most complete & respected film events in Brazil. Last yr over 60 films which otherwise might not have had commercial distribution in Brazil screened & lineup incl. retros of D.A. Pennebaker, Rosa von Praunheim, Mrinal Sen & Derek Jarman, as well as a tribute to American film noir. Other entries came from throughout Western & Eastern Europe, Africa, India & Asia. Janet Forman, who attended w/ her film *The Beat Generation*, gave the fest high marks for its organization; she thought that it offered an "amazing" amount of coverage (articles on her & her film appeared daily in the 7 major newspapers; fest had the articles translated & delivered to her in NY) & that the underlying purpose was truly for cultural benefit of São Paulo. Fest covers accomodations in São Paulo for visiting directors. Program sponsored by São Paulo Secretary of Culture & private companies & organized by film critic Leon Cakoff. Audiences estimated at over 120,000. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: mid-June. Contact: Leon Cakoff, director/Iara Lee, producer, Mostra Internacional de Cinema São Paulo, Al. Lorena, 937, Cj. 302, São Paulo 01424, Brazil; tel (011) 883-5137.

Tyneside Int'l Festival of Independent Cinema, October, England. Last yr marked 10th anniv. of fest dedicated to int'l independent productions, particularly films & videos dealing with gay & lesbian experience & works from Spanish speaking world. Docs, features, shorts & films by new directors accepted; prizes totalling £7000 awarded in cats of feature, short, regional production & video. Deadline: late June. Contact: Peter Packer, festival programmer, Tyneside Film Festival, 10 Pilgrim St., Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 6QG, England; tel: (091) 232-8289.

Renee Tajima

The village of El Cedro is in the heart of the contra war zone in Nicaragua's northern region. It has been attacked by the contras three times in the past six years. In June 1987, 10 former U.S. military men also arrived on the scene at El Cedro. Their purpose was not to prolong the war, but to help rebuild a health clinic destroyed in the attacks, and to learn what daily life is like for people living between bullets and bombs. Independent journalist Don North traveled to Nicaragua last year to document the work of the veterans of World War Two, Korea, and Vietnam, who are members of the Veterans Peace Action Team. The result is **The War in El Cedro**, a 50-minute film now available in home video from the filmmaker. In it, North explores the inner conflicts these veterans faced in Nicaragua, coming to grips with their own patriotism, U.S. foreign policy, and personal memories from combat on other continents. *The War in El Cedro:* Northstar Productions, 3003 O St., N.W., #1, Washington, DC 20007; (202) 338-7337.

Enrique Oliver has just released his first feature, **Lola La Loca**, with a premiere at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. *Lola La Loca* is the humorous story of a well-intentioned young social worker's visit to an Hispanic housing development in Boston to check on her client's eligibility for welfare. There, the woman stumbles into a puzzling society of outrageous characters acting within unfamiliar rules of behavior. Although the client Lola is not around, neighbors, lovers, friends, and enemies that the social worker meets each has a story to tell. Oliver wrote, directed, starred in, and coproduced the film with Martha Fowlkes. It was shot by Bobby Bukowski, with original music by Daniel Indart. *Lola La Loca:* Elegya Films, 835 Huntington Ave., #1809, Boston, MA 02115; (617) 522-1460 or (617) 739-0721.

Cowboy Poets, a new film by producer/director Kim Shelton, recently premiered at the National Educational Film & Video Festival. This is Shelton's second movie documenting contemporary cowboy culture: a celebration of a previously unrecognized folk tradition and a particular brand of poetry of the West. For 100 years, cowboys have belied the myth of macho that surrounds them by writing poetry about the life they love. The work of the three cowboy poets who are profiled in the film, Wally McRae, Slim Kite, and Waddie Mitchell, ranges from the threat of strip mining to the impossible dream of owning one's own ranch and the disappearance of the cowboy and his lifestyle. *Cowboy Poets:* Larsen Associates, 1 Clyde Alley, San Francisco, CA 94107; (415) 957-1205.



Don North's film *War in El Cedro* features U.S. military veterans who travelled to the Nicaraguan war zone to help rebuild a health clinic destroyed by the contras. Pictured here is Veterans Peace Action Team member Bob Spitzer examining a sick Nicaraguan child.

Courtesy filmmaker

Jamie Walters is currently in postproduction on **Beat: The Performance Poetry of Chasen Gaver**, a 28-minute video documentary on the work of the Washington-based artist. The tape culminates four years of collaboration between the videomaker and the poet, recording the innovative ways in which Gaver uses movement, percussion, and other performance elements to enhance the delivery of verse. The tape documents Gaver's work before live audiences, including his teaching experiences with junior high school students in Washington public schools, as well as studio recordings of poems. Funding for *Beat* came from the D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities, the Painted Bride Art Center, and private sponsors and donations. *Beat:* VFE Productions, 1750 16th St., NW, #808, Washington, D.C. 20009; (202) 265-4191.

AIVF member Mary Ann Lynch coauthored and crewed on the production of **Waging Peace** with filmmakers Val Kim and Bruce Logan. The film will be a one-hour documentary recording the first trip to the U.S. by 15 Soviet youth, aged 12 to 17, over the holiday season of December 1987 to January 1988. The trip was sponsored by the Youth Ambassadors of America as part of a cultural exchange program between children of the two world powers. The entire crew, hailing from California, Hawaii, and New York, donated their services with equipment contributed by Clairmont Camera and Eclectic Enterprises. The crew accompanied the delegation to California, Washington State, and New York, and plans to shoot a follow-up meeting of Soviet and U.S. youth in Russia. *Waging Peace:* Oceans Fire Productions, Box 8406, Mission Hills, CA 91346; (818) 893-9192, or Box 61672, Honolulu, HI 96822; (808) 955-3223.

Karil Daniels' 57-minute documentary, **Water Babies: Experiences of Water Birth**, has been winning awards on the festival circuit for its examination of the use of water for labor, childbirth, and early childhood development. Shot on location in the Soviet Union, France, and the United States, the film provides information on various approaches to water birth, and shows how it takes place in home, hospital, and birth center settings, placing it in the context of the twentieth century gentle birth movement. The documentary includes interviews with doctors who have pioneered the water birth method, as well as women who describe their own experiences. *Water Baby:* Karil Daniels, Point of View Productions, 2477 Folsom St., San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 821-0435.

The omnibus project of seven internationally reknowned women directors, **Seven Women—Seven Sins**, premiers theatrically this month in Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and New York City. The project derives from the question, "What constitutes a deadly sin in this day and age?" posed by German television ZDF to seven directors selected to create their own renderings of "The Seven Deadly Sins." Each assigned themselves a "sin." Helke Sanders' *Gluttony* begins with an animated story of Eve offering the apple to Adam, thus setting the tone for male/female relationships. Bette Gordon's *Greed* is a film noir mystery in which a ladies' lounge attendant's lottery ticket is destroyed by a "rich bitch." Maxi Cohen's *Anger* features various loathing New York types. Chantal Ackerman's *Sloth* features the filmmaker in bed complaining that she must get up and make a film about it. Valie Export's *Lust* is a baroque, pop music video about sex and consumerism. Laurence Gavron's *Envy* tracks a jealous composer who resorts to murder. And Ulrike Ottinger's *Pride* combines bizarre archival footage of parades with a fantastic allegorical procession. *Seven Women—Seven Sins:* Lauren Hyman, publicity, 25 Bethune St., New York, NY 10014; (212) 206-9107.

CLASSIFIEDS

The Independent's **Classifieds** column includes all listings for "Buy • Rent • Sell," "Freelancers" & "Postproduction" categories. It is restricted to members only. Each entry has a **250 character limit** & costs **$15 per issue.** Ads exceeding this length will be edited. Payment must be made at the time of submission. Anyone wishing to run a classified ad more than once must pay for each insertion & indicate the number of insertions on the submitted copy. Each classified ad must be typed, double-spaced & worded exactly as it should appear.

Deadlines for **Classifieds** will be respected. These are the 8th of each month, **two months** prior to the cover date, e.g., May 8 for the July issue. Make check or money order—no cash, please—payable to FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

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FOR SALE: JK optical printer, bought new 11/86, excellent condition, 2 lens, 16mm & S8mm gates, bolex rex 5 camera, JK computerized sequencer. Call Dawn (216) 961-9367, or 229-0968; leave message.

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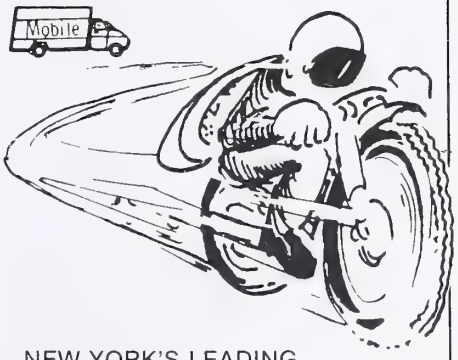
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NOTICES

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as permits. **The Independent** reserves the right to edit for length.

Deadlines for **Notices** will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date, e.g., May 8 for the July issue. Send notices to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Conferences • Workshops

3RD ANNUAL FILM & VIDEO SUMMER INSTITUTE offered by the University of Hawaii at Manoa, July 25-Aug. 12. Weekly seminars incl. Intro to Asian Cinema, Doc & Intensive Prod. Workshops. Contact: Susan Horowitz, FAVSI, Univ. of Hawaii, Box 11450, Dept. FV, Honolulu, HI 96828-0450; (808) 948-7221.

CALIFORNIA LAWYERS FOR THE ARTS: Copyright clinics to be held on the 2nd & 4th Sats each mo. during '88 (except Feb. 13, May 28, Nov. 26 & Dec. 24). Drop-in consultations of approx. 20 min. from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at CLA Library, Bldg. C, Rm. 255 (2nd fl.), Fort Mason Center, San Francisco, CA, $10 for members; $20 nonmembers. CLA, Fort Mason Center, Bldg. C, San Francisco, CA 94123; (415) 775-7200.

VOLUNTEER LAWYERS FOR THE ARTS holds monthly immigration seminars for artists & reps of arts organizations, conducted by experts on immigration law & geared to particular needs of artists, incl. visual & performing artists, writers, musicians/songwriters, etc. Issues incl. new federal amnesty act & obtaining work permits. Held on 2nd Thurs. each mo., 7-9 p.m. Registration $10 in advance, $15 at door. For info & seminar locations, contact: Barry H. Slinker, VLA, 1285 Ave. of the Americas, 3rd fl., New York, NY 10019; (212) 977-9270.

1988 NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP SEMINAR SERIES organized by Volunteer Consulting Group to be held at various locations in NYC, May 3-20. Topics incl. Foundation Giving, Fundraising: The Role of the Board, Corporate Giving, Business Ventures for Nonprofits, Marketing & Effective Public Relations & others. Contact: VCG, 24 W. 40th St., New York, NY 10018; (212) 869-0800.

NAMAC CONFERENCE: The 1988 Nat'l Alliance of Media Arts Centers' annual conference will be held in conjunction w/ 12th Atlanta Film & Video Fest, May 18-21 at High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA. Main theme: Media Arts Exhibition, w/ AFVF screenings held each evening. Topics incl. marketing/publicity/audience development; info services; criticism/program notes/aesthetics of media arts; artists' concerns; exhibition technology/hardware; intermedia arts. Contact: NAMAC, c/o IMAGE Film/Video Ctr., 75 Bennett St., NW, Ste. M-1, Atlanta, GA 30309; (404) 352-4225.

ITS/NATPE 1ST INT'L TELEPRODUCTION CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION to be held June 25-28 at Los Angeles Convention/Exhibition Ctr. Contact: Susan Stanco, ITS Dir. of Conference Marketing, Int'l Teleproduction Society, 990 6th Ave., Ste. 21E, New York, NY 10018; (212) 629-3266.

FLAHERTY GALA party and benefit screening on May 7, 6-9 pm, at New School of Social Research's May Auditorium, 66 5th Ave, NYC. Seating limited. For reservations, send check w/ tax-deductible contribution of $25, $50 or $100—$10 for students (contributions accepted at the door, but seating not guaranteed), payable to: Int'l Film Seminars. Mail to: Flaherty Gala, Deirdre Boyle, Chair, 88 Bleecker St., #2-S, New York, NY 10012; (212) 475-1955.

INDEPENDENT FEATURE PROJECT has organized the Salon de Cinema Independant program at the Cannes Film Festival. This will provide information, hospitality, and meeting space at the Old Palais (aka Directors Fortnight) for all US filmmakers in attendance. Additional services incl. orientation, meetings w/ distributors, message center, "happy hours" & private office space. For further info, contact: Karen Arikian or Susan Slonaker, IFP, (212) 496-0909.

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY'S Film & Video Institute is offering its 7th annual summer series of professional courses, beginning May 31, June 6, 7 & 13: Film Production, Video Production, Interactive Video Development, Theory & Practice of High Definition TV, Music Scoring & Audio for Video, and Operating a Mobile Satellite Van. Courses are hands-on, small class size, w/ working professional instructors. Intensive eve. & weekend schedule. For registration, contact: Chris Kovach, (202) 885-2500; for content questions, call Greg Epler-Wood, (202) 885-2060; School of Communications, American University, Washington DC, 20016.

Films • Tapes Wanted

AXLEGREASE: Weekly cable program for Buffalo public access television features the work of local film & media artists, produced by Squeaky Wheel. Submit work to Squeaky Wheel on 3/4", Beta, VHS, or 8mm videotape, 585 Potomac Ave., Buffalo, NY 14222; (716) 884-7172.

UPTOWN, Paragon Cable Manhattan's movie channel, is sponsoring 3rd annual Short Film & Video Contest in conjunction w/ Coe Films & TVR/Mastercolor Transfer. Winner receives exclusive premiere on Uptown, optional distribution contract with Coe Films, and $500. Runner-ups receive technical services and cash prizes. Films must be no longer than 30 min. and produced w/ in past 18 mos. Submissions accepted on 3/4" and 1/2" VHS, w/ 100-word synopsis and entry form. Deadline: June 3. For entry form, send SASE to: Uptown's Short Film & Video Contest, Paragon Cable Manhattan, 5120 Broadway, New York, NY 10034.

NEW WORKS NEEDED: New UHF station in Boston looking for work by ind. film/video artists. For consideration, send examples to Music/Media, Box 1341, Gloucester, MA 01930.

NHK, JAPAN PUBLIC TV seeks current affairs, investigative & social docs for weekly 45 min. time slot running 4/88-4/89. Films can be nearly completed or finished, but must be produced within the last 2 years. Send descriptive/publicity materials to: Robert Odell, 21 W. 87th St., New York, NY 10024.

SHORT FILM SUBMISSIONS WANTED: MTV now developing weekly comedy series incorporating funny, bizarre, or "strange" short films. Optimum length: 1:30-3 min. Longer submissions screened w/ understanding that they may be edited to fit this segment length. Tapes can be submitted on 1/2" or 3/4", but must have 3/4" masters for air. Send submissions to: MTV Comedy Films, 1775 Broadway, 10th fl., New York, NY 10019.

2ND NEW YORK CITY LESBIAN & GAY Experimental Film Festival is seeking work in 16mm & Super 8 to be exhibited in Sept. 1988. Submissions between Apr. 1 & July 15. Send prints or video transfers to: Jim Hubbard, 503 Broadway, Rm. 503, New York, NY 10012. Or call (212) 505-1758. Women & minorities especially encouraged.

ICONONEGRO: THE BLACK AESTHETIC IN VIDEO ART will be 1st int'l collection of video art by or w/ African diaspora artists exploring possibility of defining distinctly Black aesthetic. Work of all genres considered, incl. narrative, performance, social commentary, portraiture, conceptual, experimental, installation, educational & commercial. Program to premiere Jan. 1989 in NYC. Submission deadline: August. Contact: Philip Mallory Jones, guest curator, ICONONEGRO, Schomburg Ctr for Research in Black Culture, 515 Malcolm X Blvd., New York, NY 10037-1801; (212) 491-2255.

CINCINNATI ARTISTS GROUP EFFORT is looking for video art work for series of 3 TV shows for broadcast distribution. Pieces should be about 5 min. or less & will be paid honoriaria of up to $200/min. for selected work. Deadline for entries: July 1. Send w/ SAS return mailer to: CAGE, 344 W. 4th St., Cincinnati, OH 45202.

THE MEDIA SHOW, Channel 4 magazine-format program dealing with film, TV, press, advertising & print, seeks films/tapes. Send videos or proposals for work-in-progress to: Kate Newington, Wall to Wall Television Ltd., 1 Richmond Mews, Off Nead St., London W1V 5AG, England.

AYLMER PRESS seeks 1/2" documentary and instructional videos for distribution. Completed videos only, nonexclusive contract. Contact: Aylmer Press, 928 Spring St., Madison, WI 53715.

Opportunities • Gigs

CINEMA STUDIES/FILM: Assistant Professor to teach 4-5 courses per yr. in prod. systems & technologies & other areas of expertise; maintain, manage & supervise film & video equip. for School of Film; serve on grad committees; asst director in long-term facilities & equip. planning; provide tech. support for the film program. Starting date: Sept. 1, 1988. Closing date: May 1 or until position is filled. Send letter of appl., resumé & references to: David O. Thomas, Dir., School of Film, Lindley Hall, Ohio Univ., Athens, OH 45701.

VIDOGRAPHERS/INSTRUCTORS/EDITORS: Summer positions available w/ Legacy Int'l Youth Program. Seeking highly motivated individuals for exceptional intercul-

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tural experience w/ youths from 30 countries, in Blue Ridge foothills, VA. Duties incl. program documentation, video instruction & planning work for potential docs & curriculum series. Interviewing *now*. June 19-Aug. 19. Nonsmokers, EOE. Located 4 hrs. so. of Washington, D.C. Contact: Marlene Ginsberg, video coordinator, Legacy Int'l Youth Program, Rte. 4, Box 265, Bedford, VA 24523; (703) 297-5982.

SOCIETY FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC EDUCATION is soliciting proposals for panels & presentations for 1989 conference "Media and Society," to be held in Rochester, NY, Mar. 16-19, 1989. Submissions should be 1 page or less & be sent before Aug. 1 to: SPE '89 Rochester Conference, Box 564, Rochester, NY 14603.

MEDIA AND THEATER ARTS teaching positions open: 1) Tenure-track associate or full professor. Writer/producer to teach & work w/ public TV. MFA or PhD, demonstrated evidence of excellence in teaching at university level, plus outstanding record of both publications and production of works of fiction & nonfiction. 2) Tenure-track assistant professor. Terminal degree required. Demonstrated ability to teach cinematography/videography, editing, and sound. On-going commitment to ind. production w/ emph. on nonfiction preferred. Send appl., resumé, supporting materials (incl. scripts, published works, tapes, films) and at least 3 letters of recommendation to: Jack Hyyppa (position #1) or Bill Neff (#2), Dept. of Media & Theater Arts, Montana State Univ., Visual Communications Bldg, Bozman, MT 59717. EOE. Women, minorities, handicapped/disabled persons, Vietnam veterans, and disabled veterans encourage to apply.

Publications • Software

THE ART OF FILING: Now available from Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts. Written by Carla Messman & published by United Arts of St. Paul, MN w/ legal editing provided in part by VLA. Price: $12.95, plus $3 for shipping & handling & $1 for each additional book. Contact: Barry H. Slinker, VLA, 1285 Ave. of the Americas, 3rd fl., New York, NY 10019; (212) 977-9270.

1988 MASSACHUSETTS PRODUCTION GUIDE to motion pic & TV prod. in MA now available. Contact: MA Office for Film & Video Development, 100 Cambridge St., 13th fl., Boston, MA 02202; (617) 727-3330.

BEHIND THE LENS: The newsletter of the Assn. of Professional Camerawomen available. Write: Box 1039, Santa Monica, CA 90406.

MOVING IMAGE REVIEW, new publication of the Northeast Historic Film organization. Contact: Northeast Historic Film, Blue Hill Falls, ME, 04615; (207) 374-2736.

CINEASTE BOOK CONTEST: Seeks writing on film for a new series of *Cineaste* books to be published in cooperation w/ Lake View Press. Celebrates *Cineaste*'s 20th anniv. Open to *Cineaste* subscribers. Manuscripts may be on any aspect of film & may be an original work, anthology, or translation. Prefer writing on subjects of social or political relevance, written in popular, nonacademic style. For copy of writer's guidelines, send SASE to 200 Park Ave. S., New York, NY 10003.

MYTH, RACE & POWER: SOUTH AFRICANS IMAGED ON FILM & TV presents an inside view of apartheid by Keyan Tomaselli, Alan Williams, Lynette Steenveld & Ruth Tomaselli. Book outlines some theoretical & practical

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strategies authors have developed in conjunction w/ local Black & nonracial orgs in their struggle against apartheid. Part of the Critical Studies in African Anthropology series available from Smyrna Press for $10. Coming up: *The Cinema of Apartheid: Race & Class in South African Films*, by Keyan Tomaselli. Contact: Smyrna Press, Box 1803, GPO, Brooklyn, NY 11202.

AMERICA'S NEWEST FOUNDATIONS: Sourcebook on Recently Created Philanthropies now available from Taft Group. $89.95. Contact: Taft Group, 5130 MacArthur Blvd., NW, Washington, DC 20016; (202) 966-7086.

USING MEDIA TO MAKE KIDS FEEL GOOD: Resources & Activities for Successful Programs in Hospitals, by Maureen Gaffney, published by Media Center for Children in conjunction w/ Child Life Center staff & other hospitals. $35 in N. Amer. Contact: Oryx Press, 2214 N. Central, Ste. 103, Phoenix, AZ 85004; (612) 254-6156.

Resources • Funds

WRITERS GUILD OF AMERICA, EAST, in conjunction with New York State Council on the Arts, will award 4 $5,000 grants for writing and preparing video docs. Applicants must have established interest in independently produced video documentaries and projects funded must be produced on videotape. Appl. incl. proposal, budget & credit list w/ emphasis on writer or writer/prod. credits. Appl. deadline: July 1. Request appl. from: WGAe Foundation, 555 W. 57th St., New York, NY 10019.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS: Advancement Grant organizational deadline: May 5 for "notice of intent to apply," June 2 for submitting complete appl. Contact: Advancement Program, Rm. 617, NEA, Nancy Hanks Ctr., 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

ADVANCED RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS IN INDIA: Offered by the Indo-US Subcommission on Education & Culture. Grants available to all academic disciplines except clinical medicine. Appl. deadline: June 15. Contact: Council for Int'l Exchange of Scholars, attn: Indo-American Fellowship Program, 11 Dupont Circle, NW, Ste. 300, Washington, DC 20036-1257; (202) 939-5469.

ALASKA STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS: Project Grants appl. deadline: May 1. Contact: Alaska State Council on the Arts, 619 Warehouse Ave., Ste. 220, Anchorage, Alaska, 99501-1682; (907) 279-1558.

WOMEN IN FILM: 4th annual Film Finishing Fund round provides small completion grants to video/filmmakers w/ demonstrated advanced & innovative skills consistent w/ goals of WIF. For guidelines & appls, send SASE to: Film Finishing Fund, Women in Film, 6464 Sunset Blvd., Ste. 660, Los Angeles, CA 90028.

HALLWALLS/CONTEMPORARY ARTS CENTER announces new deadline for regional Film Regrant Program: now postponed to May 2. Eligibility open to filmmakers in the western NY counties of Alleghany, Cattaragus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans & Wyoming. Contact: local arts council or Steve Gallagher, Film Program Dir., Hallwalls, 700 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14202; (716) 854-5828.

THE MEDIA BUREAU provides $500 grants to New York state artists for postproduction of video & radio projects. Submit appl., budget form & rough-cut of project on 3/4" videotape or audio cassette (for radio projects). Deadline: May 1. Also has funds available for presentation of video & audiotapes in New York State, incl. screenings, installations & performances of multimedia works incorporating substantial amounts of video or radio, workshops, short residencies, tech. asst & equip. access relating directly to these projects. Appls reviewed continuously. Contact: Media Bureau, The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St., New York, NY 10011; (212) 255-5793.

THE FILM BUREAU of Film/Video Arts offers grants to NY State exhibition programs sponsored by nonprofit organizations. Matching funds of up to $300 available for film rentals & up to $200 per speaking engagement for presentations by filmmakers, producers, directors, technicians & scholars. Deadlines: June 15, Aug. 15 & Jan. 15. Contact: Charles Vassallo, Film Bureau Coordinator, F/VA, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003-4797; (212) 673-9361.

MIDWEST REGIONAL FELLOWSHIP PRODUCTION GRANTS in film & video offered to independent artists in IL, IN, MI & OH through the Chicago Ctr for New TV. Appl. deadline: May 25. Contact: Ctr. for New TV, 912 S. Wabash, Chicago, IL 60605; (312) 427-5446.

INTERMEDIA ARTS MINNESOTA: Grants to Interdisciplinary Artists program funded by NEA & Rockefeller Fnd. awards $2500 to $7000 for works involving 2 or more art forms, to artists from MN, IA, ND, SD & WI. Deadline: May 6. Contact: Al Kosters, Intermedia Arts, 425 Ontario St., SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414; (612) 627-4444.

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5-9 Copies	3.00	**2.50**	4.50	**3.50**	7.00	**5.00**	7.00	**8.00**
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MIDATLANTIC ARTS FOUNDATION: Visual Arts Residency Program appl. deadline: July 15. Contact: Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation, 11 E. Chase St., Ste. 1A, Baltimore, MD 21202; (301) 539-6656.

NEW YORK COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES: Proposals for project support deadline: June 1. Contact: NYCH, 198 Broadway, 10th fl., New York, NY 10038; (212) 233-1131.

SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION Grant deadlines: May 15 & Aug. 15 for individuals & orgs. Contact: SC Arts Comm., 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201; (803) 734-8696.

FAF GRANTS for funding new work by Bay Area film/videomakers in 3 cats: short, personal works ($3000 per grant), project development ($1000 per grant) & completion/distribution ($2500 per grant). Appl. deadline: May 23. For guidelines & forms, call: (415) 552-8760.

Trims & Glitches

JUST KEEP GOING by Ellen A. Meyers won Bronze Seal at the 1988 Institute of Amateur Cinematographers Int'l Film & Video Competition in the UK. Congrats!

KUDOS to AIVF members who received Jerome Foundation NYC Film & Video Grants—Sharon Greytak & Mark Daniels.

CONGRATULATIONS to audio & video artists who received production awards from the Media Program of the New York State Council on the Arts: Charles Atlas, for *S & D*; Maxi Cohen, for a video essay on Jones Beach; Collis Davis, *Elegba's Stratagem*; Vanalyn Green, *Baseball & the Body*; Kathy High, *Women & Medicine*; Sara Hornbacher, for an art documentary; Phil Niblock, for five shorts in collaboration w/ performance artists; Karen Ranucci, for doc on TV in Latin America; Daniel Reeves, *Try to Live to See This*; Edin Velez, for video art installation on Japanese culture; Paper Tiger TV, for weekly cable series & Deep Dish TV, for nationwide satellite network.

KUDOS to Nancy Cohen & Documentary Educational Resources, recently awarded a Massachusetts Production Grant from the Massachusetts Council on Arts & Humanities to complete doc on fishing industry of Gloucester.

MORE KUDOS to Nina Rosenblum & Daedalus Productions, who received support from the Kentucky Foundation for Women & the Woodie Guthrie Foundation for one hour-long doc on women incarcerated at Female High Security Unit in Lexington, Kentucky.

WE FORGOT to congratulate AIVF member Lynne Mueller, producer of *Silver into Gold*, for her Academy Award nomination for documentary shorts.

MEMORANDA

ALAN MITOSKY REMEMBERED

I read in *The Independent* about Alan Mitosky's death. When I was director of AIVF, back in the late seventies, I had a chance to work with Alan, up on a second floor loft on 99 Prince Street. I was awed by his ability to persuade exhibitors to showcase independent short films. The exhibitors made no money on the shorts, and it ate into their profits by reducing the number of times they could turn around their feature in a day. But Alan cajoled and twisted them—"Morty. Listen to me. Morty, don't you understand? It's a preste-e-ege product!"—and they fell into line, one after the other, and the Short Film Showcase was born.

I lost touch with Alan for many years. Late last year, walking up Columbus Avenue, I saw him on the street. He was clearly very sick. "It's the big C, Tom," he said, and smiled, and put his arm around me. I tried to call him, shortly thereafter, and got no answer, and being busy, I did what New Yorkers do too often, I let it go. Reading your announcement, I thought of how he put his arm around me and how he knew, though I didn't, that he was saying goodbye. He was a tactile man. A decade earlier, I remember him, after a long day's work, putting his arm around me and Robin Weber, and our standing together, arms linked, in that unpainted loft, in the improbable early days of the AIVF. A gentle man, Alan, in life as in death.

—Thomas Lennon
New York, NY

AIVF THANKS...

...All our members who have sent donations to the AIVF Emergency Tax Equity Fund:

Robert Aaronson, Richard Armstrong, David Blair, Rose Bond, Pat Cooper, Thomas Drescher, Ralph Gerstle, Susan Goldbetter, Carol Hardin, Sharon Harkey, Richard Howorth, Imani Film and Video Productions, Jill Janows, Bill Jersey, Sally Kaplan, Theodore Life, Little Bear Films, Robert Lyons, George McQuilkin, J. Philip Miller, Sarah Pirozek, Oreet Rees, John Rosenmiller, Barry Russo, Lawrence Sapadin, Robin Schanzenbach, Joseph Sopiak, Pamela Strayer, Dyanna Taylor, Peter Weller, and Jonathan Wiedemann.

This fund was established to help AIVF underwrite efforts to obtain exemptions from rules contained in the 1986 Tax Reform Act that place extraordinary tax reporting burdens on freelance artists. For a thorough description of these developments and their effect on independent film- and videomakers, see "Breaking the Code: The Impact of the New Tax Law" and "Artists Act to Reform Tax Reform Act" in the March issue of *The Independent*. Contributions made out to AIVF Emergency Tax Equity Fund can be sent to: AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, an information clearinghouse, and a grant making program. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, foundations and organizations: The New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the Governor's Office of Motion Picture and Television Development, the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, the Consolidated Edison Company of New York, the Benton Foundation, the Funding Exchange, and the dozens of organizations that advertise in *The Independent*.

• WANTED •

BOOKSTORE OUTLETS FOR **THE INDEPENDENT**

While *The Independent* is distributed to bookstores and newsstands across the country, there are still many places where the magazine is hard to find. We would like to remedy this situation—but we need your help. If you are aware of a bookstore in your area that carries film, video, or television magazines, but doesn't stock *The Independent*, please let us know. Send the bookstore name, address, phone, and if possible, the manager's name to:

The Independent
625 Broadway, 9th fl.
New York, NY 10012
attn: Pat Thomson
or call 212/473-3400

FIVF DONOR-ADVISED FILM AND VIDEO FUND

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF) is soliciting applications for grants toward production and distribution of film and video works through its Donor-Advised Film and Video Fund. This Fund was established to work with foundations and individual donors to facilitate their support of independently produced social issue media by providing a peer review panel process that screens works and recommends finalists for funding consideration.

For 1988, FIVF's Donor-Advised Film and Video Fund is assisting three funders—the Benton Foundation, the Beldon Fund, and the Edelman Family.

The Benton Foundation will make three grant awards totalling $25,000: the Marjorie Benton Peace Film Award of $5,000 for a completed film or video that best promotes public understanding of peace issues, a $10,000 post-production grant for a work in progress whose principal photography is substantially completed and that similarly advances the interests of international peace, and a new $10,000 post-production grant for a work in progress that explores the role of communications and information in society.

The Beldon Fund will make grants totalling $20,000 for production, editing, completion, or distribution of works dealing with environmental issues.

The Edelman Family will make grants totalling $12,000 for projects that discuss, explore, or document social change. Preference will be given to requests for development funds for projects addressing contemporary issues.

The Donor-Advised Film and Video Fund is interested in works that reach a broad audience and combine intellectual clarity and journalistic quality with creative and imaginative film- and videomaking. Priority will be given to works on issues that have received minimal coverage and works that have the potential for wide exposure in distribution.

To receive guidelines and an application for consideration under this grant program, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

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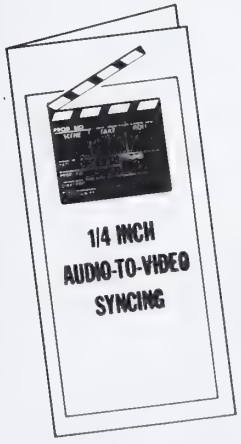
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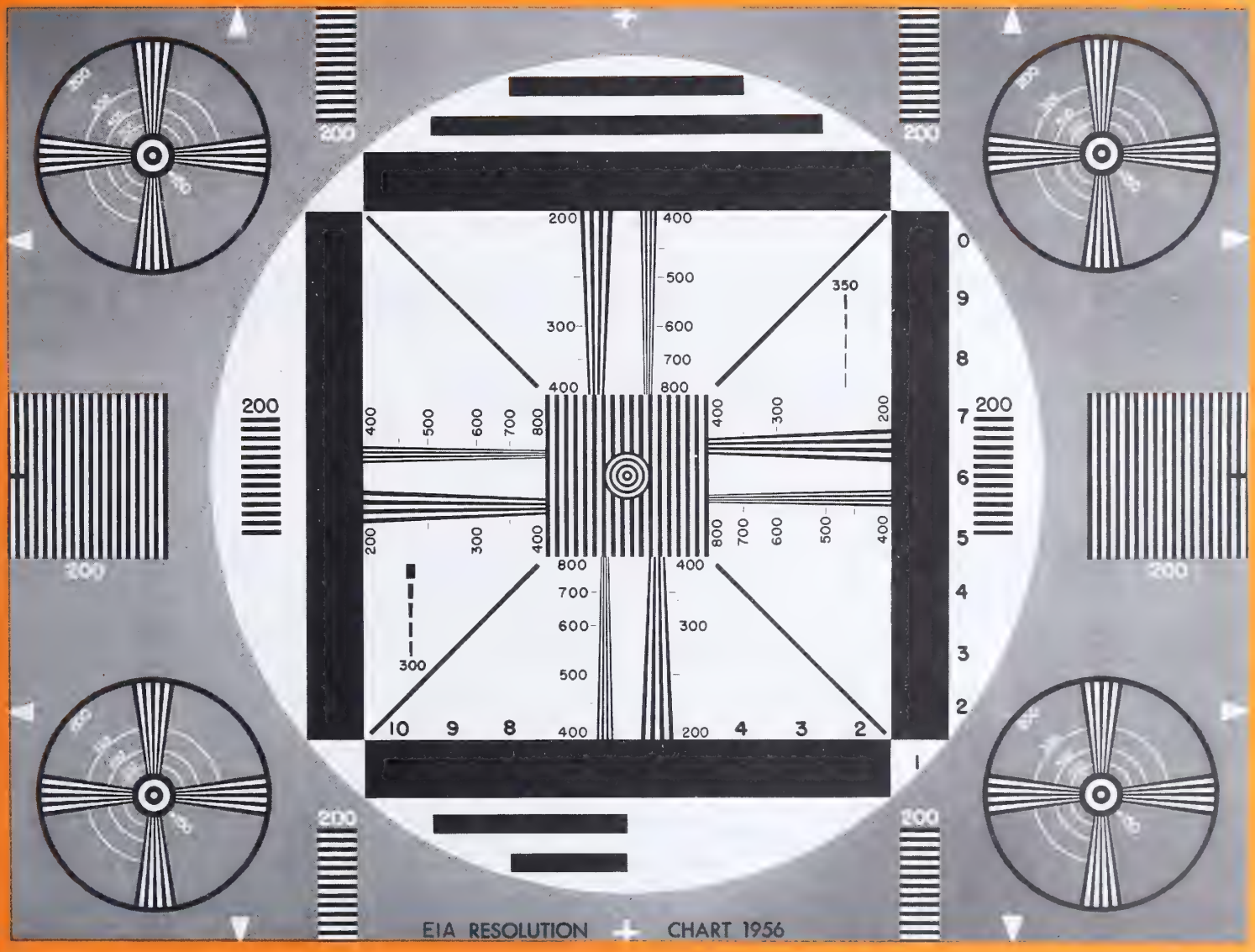
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COVER: Based on a resolution chart for TV camera set-up available from Hale Color Consultants, Inc., 1505 Phoenix Rd., Phoenix, MD 21131.

FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY
THE INDEPENDENT

JUNE 1988
VOLUME 11, NUMBER 5

Almost since the first days of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, this organization has been involved in the struggle to gain greater access to public television for independent film and videomakers in this country. Too often, this issue has been seen as limited to the interests of public affairs documentary producers or, possibly, the people engaged in making the kind of programs seen on *American Playhouse*, *WonderWorks*, or *Alive from Off-Center*. While preserving and improving public television's reception of this kind of work remains important, this by no means defines the horizon of independent production that could be made and broadcast for national audiences.

In the 14 years of AIVF's existence, public television has both expanded exponentially and suffered setbacks—in funding during the early years of the Reagan administration and in its ability to realize a true alternative to commercial television. Now, in 1988, as AIVF—working as part of the National Association of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers—nears the conclusion of yet another round of efforts to convince Congress and the public broadcasting community of the integral role independents could play in a truly public TV system, we have decided to devote an entire issue of *The Independent* to this topic.

In the following pages you will find the documents that comprise a record of the work accomplished by the Coalition in the past year. We begin with the proposals for a National Independent Program Service (NIPS) and Minority Programming Services, written collaboratively by groups of independent producers across the country, originating with the Association of California Independent Public Television Producers and reworked with contributions from committees, principally in Boston and New York City. These key statements are followed by a short history of the relationship between public television and independents since passage of the 1978 federal legislation that recognized the importance of independent work to diverse and innovative television programming on public TV. Although this was also produced collaboratively, Robert Spencer, an independent documentary producer in New York City, deserves credit for assembling and organizing the historical data.

The special section concludes with statements by various independent producers as well as the two Coalition co-chairs—AIVF executive director Lawrence Sapadin and Lawrence Daressa, who is also the founder and president of California Newsreel—delivered before Congress in March of this year. Sandwiched between these sets of documents is a sample of some of the assessments of public television published in the national press during the months that Coalition was mapping a strategy and building a larger coalition of supporters for reforms in public TV. Necessarily, at times the documents produced for one purpose within the overall organizing and advocacy campaign are redundant with others, but rather than revising them retrospectively, we ask readers to accept this limitation.

Invisible in this account are many of the individuals and groups who have been central in the past year's advocacy work—independent producers and media activists whose work and commitment form the bedrock of all that you will read here. In our August/September issue we will correct this absence by supplementing this material with reports from around the country written by a number of these people.

This issue was prepared during April and early May, before the conclusion of the Coalition's recent discussions with public television representatives and Congresspeople following the reauthorization hearings. Therefore, it is premature to report on the outcome of these talks or the final version of the 1988 public broadcasting legislation, which will not be known until June at the earliest. Our August/September issue will also contain that information as well as background on other aspects of the Coalition's campaign to achieve a national public television program service dedicated to independent video and film.

Martha Gever
Editor

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SOURCE	Paper Print Collection
DATE	1906-05-19
VOLUME	–
ISSUE	–

SCENES IN SAN FRANCISCO

AM&B (c) H77926
Cameraman: Otis M. Gove
Location: San Francisco Photographed: May 9, 1906
115 ft. FLA5195 (print) FRA2153 (neg.)

The cameraman placed his camera in various spots throughout the devastated area to record the damage caused by the earthquake. The camera pans from 40 to 180 degrees. In both the foreground and background, remains of buildings can be seen. The film also shows people going about their business of restoring the city, tearing down walls, and scraping up debris. Also shown are living facilities, army outdoor camp stoves, tents, and a line of persons getting their soup from a soup kitchen.

SOURCE	Hearst News of the Day
DATE	1963-12-01
VOLUME	35
ISSUE	231

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LETTERS

SAMB REMEMBERED

To the editor:

This letter is to inform your readers that Senegalese filmmaker Ababacar Samb Makharam, a pioneering figure in African cinema, recently passed away. Samb was the first secretary-general of the Pan African Federation of Filmmakers, an organization that grew from three to 33 member countries during the five years of his leadership. As a film director, he was acknowledged as a profoundly original writer whose mission was to arrive at a unique synthesis of traditional African cultures and the "modern" world, rejecting both the "noble savage" mystique and the temptation to imitate the work of Western filmmakers. His feature films *Kodou* and particularly *Jom* (a Wolof word meaning "honor" and "dignity") attest to this effort. A dedicated statesman and a generous, loyal friend, Ababacar Samb left us before he could realize his dream of a unified African cinema. His death is a great loss to us all.

—Carol Munday Lawrence
Palo Alto, CA

ARCHIVAL ADDENDA

To the editor:

I thought Pat Thomson's article "Sleuth: The Search for Television News Footage" [March 1988] was clearly written and extremely useful. Finding and negotiating rights for archival footage can be a tricky business; your article was a real service to the community of independent producers.

However, I would like to add some crucial details to make sure that credit goes where credit is due. I was, indeed, the senior researcher for *Eyes on the Prize*. As your article claimed, I did hunt for (and find) film in many out-of-the-way sources—in southern TV stations, university collections, museums, and private attics and basements. But many other people were involved with the film research for the series. As I explained to Thomson over the phone, I personally did *none* of the research at the well-known New York and D.C. film archives. That research was very ably carried out by Sue Williams, Lewanne Jones, David Thaxton, Kevin Green, Jim DeVinney, Kay Matschullat, and Mary Lance. They turned up remarkable footage at "the majors"—and in many cases, they uncovered film the archives themselves were unaware of. Their work was critical to the success of the series.

Although your article focused on film research in out-of-the-way archives, I feel these film researchers should be mentioned and given their share of the credit for the research that went into *Eyes on the Prize*.

—Laurie Kahn-Leavitt
Boston, MA

To the editor:

I have just read Pat Thomson's "Sleuth: The Search for Television News Footage." It correctly states the Worldwide Television News (formerly UPITN) holds domestic footage from the sixties and seventies, but indicates that our foreign coverage is only from the seventies on. In fact, UPITN foreign coverage began, as did our domestic, in October 1963, when UPI began its own TV service, succeeding the UPI-Movietone clip service of the 1950s. For foreign *and domestic* coverage, the WTN (UPITN) and Movietonews libraries are complementary through the mid-late seventies, with WTN foreign coverage continuing to the present.

WTN can also provide worldwide coverage from two other libraries, that of Britain's Independent Television News (ITN: 1955-now), and from Britain's Pathé Newsreel (1896-1966) which we market internationally, but do not own, as the article states.

There have been a number of partial listings of libraries prepared in the past, but these are incomplete and dated. We all anxiously await Rick Prelinger's promising and expectedly inclusive contribution.

—Vincent O'Reilly
library manager,
Worldwide Television News Corporation
New York, NY

AFTERTHOUGHTS ON AFI FEST

To the editor:

Thank you for your recent coverage by Martha Gever of the 1987 AFI Video Festival [March 1988]. Some of the information on the funding of the festival was inaccurate, however, and since it's important for us to acknowledge the support of our contributors, I'd like to set the record straight. The festival was supported by cash grants totalling $60,000 from the Rockefeller Foundation, Ampex Corporation, Ikegami, and an AFI Trustee. The festival's revenues, including ad sales, registration fees, and concession sales totalled $25,000. AFI covered the remaining $115,000 in direct costs. Sony contributed equipment and tape stock.

—Terry Lawler
director, TV/Video Services
American Film Institute
Los Angeles, CA

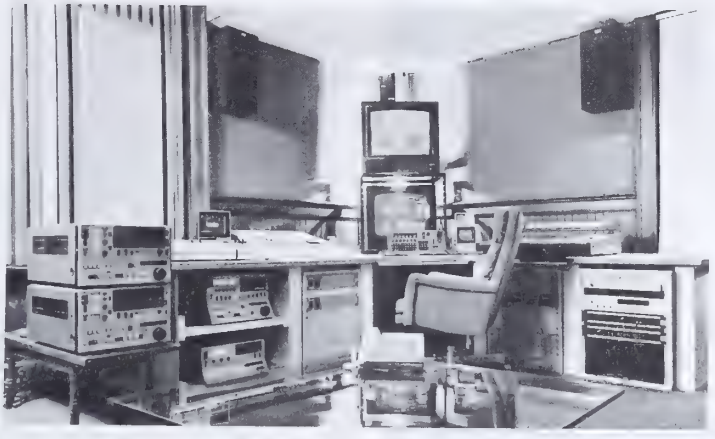
To the editor:

Martha Gever began her article "Measuring Video Activity: The 1987 AFI Video Festival" by alluding to my opening remarks on the panel devoted to evaluating the AFI festival premieres. I object to the way that I feel this allusion, and other subsequent comments scattered throughout the article, misrepresent my position about the current state of video art. Although I did indeed begin my presentation with the question "Why is there no good video art?," this question was intended to serve as a provocative rhetorical ploy, rather than as a sweeping condemnation of the field. The text of my speech, with amplifications, was published in the January 1988 issue of *Afterimage*. I would like to refer readers to this text, which contains the substance of my arguments.

Gever wrote, "...Tamblyn implied that none of the tapes that premiered at this edition of the festival were up to snuff." This is not an accurate summation of my remarks. I made a point of singling out several tapes as praiseworthy. Some of my choices (*Consuming Hunger*, *Babel*, and *Ethnic Notions*) coincided with the ones Gever cited as examples to "...contest Tamblyn's conclusion that video art suffers from a paucity of ideas or techniques on the basis of these works alone."



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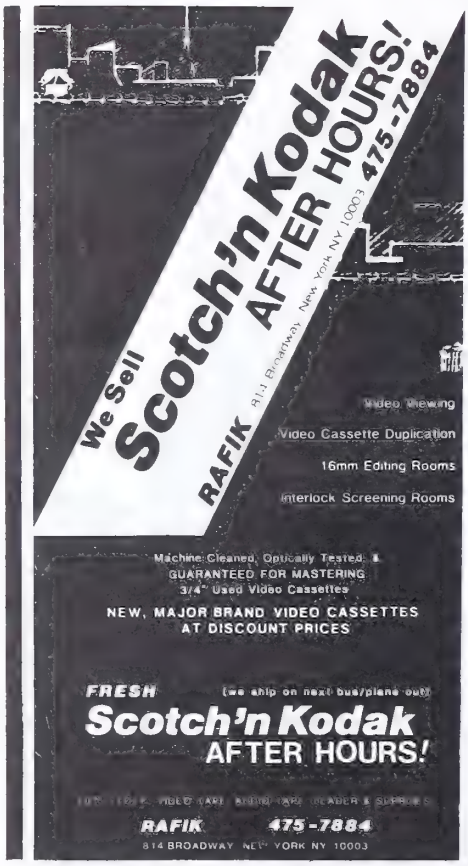
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I do not appreciate being designated as a Clement Greenbergian upholder of traditional standards of quality. This seems to be what Gever meant to insinuate when she wrote, "To consider whether or not Seiling's choices represented 'the best' or even 'good' video art—vague terms bandied about at the panel—would require a major essay, one that would debunk the assumptions of those who use such evaluative language." The real focus of my presentation was on current conditions that hamper the production, distribution, promotion, and reception of video art, as well as the education of potential video artists. I also was very specific about my criteria for assigning value, even without writing a "major essay." I decried the ossification of video art into predictable genres, along with the atrophy of ground-breaking experimentation and inventive risk-taking. And I bemoaned the paucity of tapes that were personally idiosyncratic, quirky, humorous, or politically audacious (as opposed to "politically correct").

I am bewildered about what Gever finds so objectionable about the use of evaluative language. If alternative video production is not "...moribund, the poor step-child of commercial television or avant-garde film," as she claims, then why shouldn't it be subject to rigorous critical appraisal? Is it necessary to lavish the sort of patronizing boosterism on the medium that one uses to encourage if not a poor step-child then perhaps a retarded mendicant? In a postmodern era in which the strictures of medium specificity no longer seem relevant, what is wrong with applying the same standards that are used to assess the value of work in other mediums to video? It seems to me that a climate of critical accountability will have to be established before video can be taken seriously as a viable mode of cultural production.

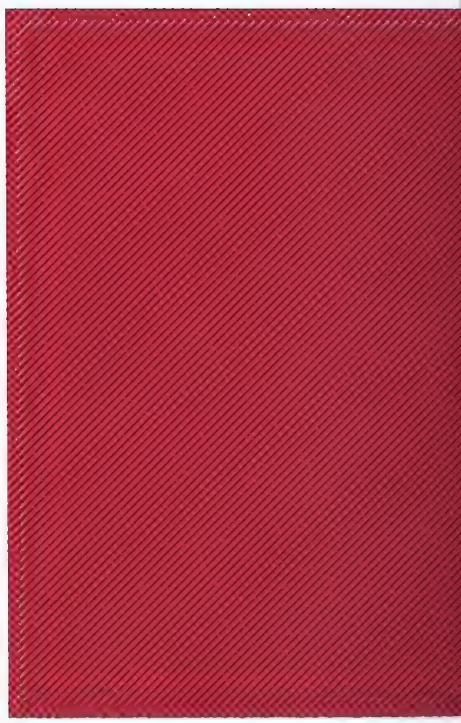
—*Christine Tamblyn*
San Francisco, CA

Martha Gever replies:

If Christine Tamblyn objects to being mistaken for an "upholder of traditional standards of quality," perhaps she should avoid writing about "the current dearth of qualitative video," as she did in *Afterimage*. Since the qualitative standards she defends both in that article and in her remarks at AFI were those of personal idiosyncracy, humor, insincerity, and political audacity, as well as "the edgy, unpredictable thrill of discovery" are well-established criteria employed in modernist avant-garde art criticism, I fail to see where she departs much from the tradition of a "fascination with novelty" she correctly attributes to the overlapping domains of avant-garde art and consumer culture. But she is mistaken if she believes that my remark about evaluative language was directed solely or even primarily at her. That comment pertained to the festival's concluding panel as a whole—and especially an exchange between Neil Seiling and John Schott—not to Tamblyn's participation in particular.

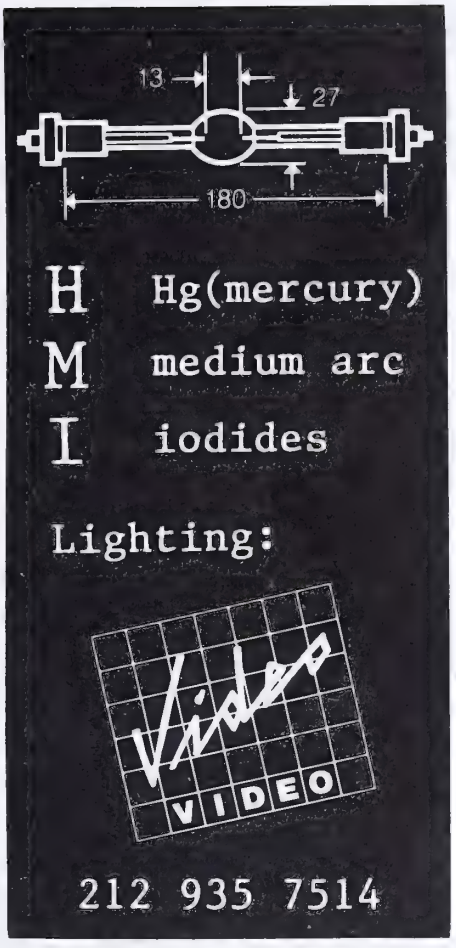
Having reread Tamblyn's piece on the AFI festival in *Afterimage*, I find it additionally curious that she objects to my quotation of her rhetorical statement announcing that there's "no good video art." In print she reiterated that view: "My respect for Seiling's perspicaciousness predisposes me to believe that the works he selected are among the best being produced. And yet seeing them reinforced my opinion that there isn't much interesting work being done in video now." Since she meant these observations to be provocative, I am surprised that she now protests my contestation. And I


THE INDEPENDENT



continue to heartily disagree, although that does not automatically consign me to the camp of "patronizing boosterism" or leave me ignorant of the conditions of production, the pressures for videomakers to make work that reproduces approved styles or safe politics, or the need for critical analyses that take these factors into account. However, the formulation of "critical yardsticks against which to measure a video artist's success or failure," as Tamblyn advocates in *Afterimage*, seems inadequate to cultural production—including much recent video—that eludes traditional concepts of art.

In order to propose a remedy for the "gloomy scenario" that produces so much that is uninteresting to her, Tamblyn invokes postmodernism, but only to support the application of critical methods "used to assess value in other mediums to video." A critical postmodern perspective, however, suggests that the entire foundation and ideology of the art critical apparatus that now operates must be examined and itself subjected to criticism, a task, I again assert, that requires demanding, complex, and, yes, rigorous analysis, and not the tired, narrow language of an artist's "success" or "failure," "good," "bad," or "interesting" art.



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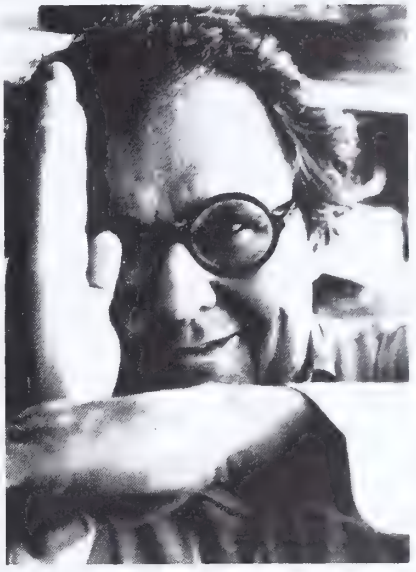
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POST PROMPTS NYSCA INQUEST

Probably, boarding a bus at 6:30 a.m. in order to attend a legislative hearing in Albany, New York, is no one's idea of a good time. But for the artists and arts administrators who travelled to the New York State Legislature on March 23 for a joint meeting of the Assembly Tourism, Sports Development and Arts Committee and the Senate Culture Committee, the daytrip turned out to be a good idea. The occasion was a special hearing, with New York State Council on the Arts chair Kitty Carlisle Hart and executive director Mary Hays sharing the spotlight. This was not a routine report to elected representatives about what their allocations for the arts had achieved, but a special session to answer accusations of political impropriety made in three articles and an editorial in the *New York Post* the previous week.

In giant type the *Post*'s March 16 front page exclaimed, "Tax $$ Paying for Men in Drag," and in smaller print, "State spends 100G to push gay way of life," illustrated by a photograph of a transvestite. Inside, the *Post*'s state political editor Fredric Dicker detailed the information he had unearthed in the NYSCA files, which was amended by a shorter item, "Grant denied for film 'Diary of City Priest.'" Dicker had combed the lists of last year's NYSCA grants and discovered that the Fund for Human Dignity, a nonprofit affiliate of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, had sponsored several arts projects that received NYSCA funding, including a documentary photo project on transvestism. Dicker's article also faulted a $20,000 grant to the same organization for a "film" (actually a videotape, *Testing the Limits*) that would include documentary footage of the March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights last October. Meanwhile, the same author contrasted these and an award to the feminist journal *Conditions* with a grant denied for a documentary film on an inner city Catholic priest.

Nowhere in either article did Dicker explain the structure of NYSCA's programs—organized according to disciplines like literature, film, media, visual arts, etc.—the function of peer review panels, or the procedures that require individual artists to apply under the auspices of a not-for-profit organization. And throughout the subjects of documentary projects were equated, in effect, with the recipients of the grants.

Despite these distortions and demagogic tactics, the chairs of both legislative committees that oversee the state's arts funding—Syracuse Republican Tarky Lombardi in the Senate and Niagara Democrat Matthew Murphy in the Assembly—and as well as Governor Mario Cuomo reacted immediately with demands for explanations from NYSCA. In the next day's *Post*, Dicker announced these effects of his stories along with additional revelations re NYSCA—grants for "a pro-Sandinista film [*Fire from the Mountain*], an anti-landlord tenants group and an anti-apartheid 'newspaper' committed to being 'an active social force.'"

The argument advanced in Dicker's news stories was repeated and further amplified in the lead editorial published that day. After again citing NYSCA's several grants to the Fund for Human Dignity as "part of a $100,000 expenditure...to promote homosexuality and lesbianism," the author asks, "[W]hat is going on at the state Council on the Arts? What sort of moral vacuum obtains there? How is it that folks entrusted with handing out public funds have no problem with giving a psychological disorder...the imprimatur of the State of New York?" And the piece concludes, "[T]he council must be made to understand that when public dollars are spent, society's moral standards apply."

This rhetoric set the stage for the joint legislative committee session on the following Wednesday. In the intervening days, however, arts organizations throughout the state responded to the *Post*'s attack on NYSCA with telephone calls, telegrams, and letters of support, as well as encouragements to attend the committees' session. On the day of the hearing, the committee room in the Albany State House was jammed with interested spectators, who applauded enthusiastically when NYSCA and arts funding in general were defended and remained coldly silent the few times Hart and Hays were asked to justify the grants described in the *Post*.

The leading proponents of increased scrutiny and ideological guidelines for NYSCA were Republican Assemblymen Frank Talomie Sr. from Geneva and Philip Healey from Nassau, who grilled Hart and Hays about the propriety of certain grants. Healey went so far as to demand proof that an anti-lesbian writer or a film on the contras would be funded to "balance" the grants to *Conditions* and *Fire from the Mountain*. Queens Democrat Frederick Schmidt echoed that sentiment when he warned the Council against giving grants for projects that "advocate a point of view, not artistic performance." Quoting passages written by the applicants singled out by the *Post*, Suffolk County Senator Owen Johnson cautioned the Council to be "sensitive" and stated that their mission is to fund "art-for-art's sake." Hart firmly reminded the Senator that art and politics are frequently inseparable. "Documentaries are art when they're done by an artist," she asserted.

As the morning wore on, however, the inquest turned into a litany of praise for the Arts Council's achievements—and tributes to Hart in particular. In an unapologetic pro-NYSCA speech Assemblyman Robert Connor, a Democrat from Rockland County, expressed his embarrassment at spending "time responding to a single reporter of a single newspaper." Instead, he suggested, the committees should be discussing ways to increase NYSCA's budget. Various Senators and Assemblymen (*all* men) took turns proclaiming their opposition to censorship and their appreciation for the arts. The most convincing of this long list of speakers was Westchester Democratic Assemblyman Richard Brodsky. "I don't think it's this group's business what I think of a lesbian writer," he said, declaring his unabashed belief in the necessity of "unpleasant diversity" in the arts.

As a rejoinder to colleagues who speechified about NYSCA's "accountability," Brodsky told Hart that she should make "no apology for programs." When the event was over, the spectators breathed a collective sigh of relief. Outside the committee room a legislative observer told me that this audience tipped the scales. Without this impressive show of support, he noted, the event easily might have turned into a gay-bashing session, with some of the anti-censorship orators speaking out of the other side of their mouths.

Despite the apparent suspension of the *Post*'s campaign against NYSCA, the political mileage that state-funded culture potentially provides its critics has hardly been exhausted. New York State artists engaged in documentary projects and those producing work with obvious political references and alliances are surely the most vulnerable, but they can also best articulate the artistic validity of their work. The upcoming meetings of the Council and its committees, which are open to the public and the most likely sites for challenges to funding recommendations from the peer panels of the various NYSCA programs, will measure the success of the *Post*'s campaign for enforcing what it deems acceptable "moral standards," or, alternately, they will confirm the Council's commitment to art that contributes to a diverse, sometimes dissenting cultural climate.

MARTHA GEVER

CABLE FEELS THE HEAT

A year and a half has passed since cable deregulation went into effect, and Congress is not happy with the results. During this time, basic subscriber rates have climbed an average of 16 percent, although increases of 50, 100, even 200 percent or more have not been uncommon. Hundreds of public television and independent stations have been switched to upper channels (or "Siberia" in

cable parlance), and a few dropped altogether, with cable company-owned program services usurping these more visible and lucrative channel locations. City governments have seen their regulatory powers whittled away by a series of district court decisions, with dire results for public access and universal service requirements.

Because of these and other trends, Congress now fears it may have given away too much of the store. Consequently is has gone on the offensive. Hearings on the cable industry were called in March by Howard Metzenbaum (D-Ohio), chair of the Senate Subcommittee on Anti-Trust, Monopolies, and Business Rights, and by Edward Markey (D-Massachusetts), chair of the House Telecommunications Subcommittee.

The cable industry is obviously feeling the heat. Cable lobbyists have assumed a defensive posture, and have cautioned the industry to tone down the rhetoric and ease up on potentially offensive actions. Nonetheless, some cable companies have ignored the warnings of Congress and cable lobbyists. They continue to wage battle within the court system using the First Amendment to challenge access requirements, franchise fees, and the basic concept of exclusive franchises, thereby threatening the cities' regulatory powers. However, due to the changing atmosphere on Capital Hill, the cable industry is beginning to publicly distance itself from these companies, casting them in the role of renegade. At times this can require a stretch of the imagination. For example, the second largest multiple system operator, American Television and Communications, was called part of a "radical fringe" by a top cable executive speaking before Congress, who thought its court action in Erie, Pennsylvania, which seeks to abolish key franchise requirements and undermine city authority, was "unfitting."

Meanwhile, the city of Santa Ana, California, has decided to fight the local cable operator, Comcast Cable, with a countersuit. The dispute is over four requirements inherited by Comcast when it took over the franchise: a $2-million access studio, a grant to support local programming, an institutional network, and a microwave interconnect of local cities and universities. In December 1987 Comcast filed suit for the violation of its First Amendment rights. It subsequently sent a letter to its subscribers saying their basic rates would go up from $13.50 to $17.95, solely because of the costs of providing access services—and the difference would be refunded if the city relieved the company of its access requirements. Subsequently, the subscribers voted for the refund—and against public access. The city, however, refused to accept Comcast's maneuver. When Comcast rejected the city's compromise proposal—that Comcast hold off on rate increases in exchange for a three-year deferral in the construction of its studio facility—Santa Ana officials filed suit against the cable operator in March.

Comcast's new rates would represent a 158 percent increase since 1984, with a reduction in

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services. Company officials justified the hikes by arguing that their rates were artificially low to begin with—a defense commonly offered by cable operators. This argument was met with open skepticism when echoed by other system operators before Senator Metzenbaum's subcommittee, as were numerous other industry defenses. At one point Metzenbaum interrupted cable lobbyist James Mooney to say, "Some of us feel we were 'had' when we passed [the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984]," adding, "My colleagues and I are ready to reexamine the Act in respect to rates and program availability." Similar recommendations were made in the House subcommittee. One of the Cable Act's authors, Tuscon mayor Thomas Volgy, said that "When Congress established the Cable Act to 'preserve the critical role of governments in the franchise process,' it intended to give us the tools needed to do that job." Instead, said Volgy, "For all intents and purposes, [the cities] are completely deregulated. It is going to be a scarce city that will take up a fight" against belligerent cable operators. Volgy proposed that cities be given blanket immunity from monetary damages resulting from First Amendment lawsuits brought by would-be cable operators, and, more generally, that the Cable Act be revisited by Congress.

While Congress does not yet appear ready to introduce legislation modifying the Cable Act, it is far from finished with the issue. In addition to the Senate subcommittee hearings scheduled to resume in May, several other investigations are pending or already underway. Senator John Kerry (D-Massachusetts), a member of the Commerce Committee, is informally looking into anti-competitive practices within the cable industry. A group of state Attorneys General have formed an anti-trust task force pertaining to cable to "fill a gap left open by the Justice Department." The General Accounting Office has been instructed by Markey to undertake a study of basic rate increases. As conciliatory as cable spokespeople appear during this period of Congressional attention, it will probably take legislative action to keep the effects of deregulation under control.

PATRICIA THOMSON

WORLDWIDE WOMEN'S FILM GROUP FORMED

Despite a *Variety* announcement declaring "Film Femmes Form Broad Alliance," the newly established Cinema Women International Federation—Kino Women International or KIWI, for short—kicked off earlier this year at a meeting in Tbilisi, Soviet Georgia, with a surprisingly narrow reach. Criticism has already emerged over the lack of representation from women of color in what its founders hope to become an international organization of women film, video, and television

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professionals. Having returned to their respective countries to organize on a national level, they will try to build a broader base for a second world congress, tentatively scheduled in 1989.

Cinema Women had its beginnings at the Women's Day program during last year's Moscow Film Festival, which was attended by representatives from Women in Film in California. Soviet filmmaker Lana Gogoberidze, now Cinema Women's chair, and Soviet critic Maya Turovskaya met again with the U.S. women last January at On Screen, the San Francisco-based women's film festival, where they formalized plans for the founding congress. According to Patricia Mellencamp, a Milwaukee film scholar and officer of the organization, Gogoberidze traveled around the U.S. inviting delegates to the event, held from February 26 to March 4 in Tbilisi. The U.S. delegation included Mellencamp, Pamela Rosenberg from Los Angeles Women in Film, Barbara Parker of San Francisco Women in Film, and San Francisco documentary filmmaker Paula Lee Heller, all of whom were elected to Cinema Women's interim governing Council. No women of color were included in the delegation.

At least one Latina filmmaker, Lourdes Portillo, had met with U.S. delegates and Gogoberidze before the congress, to urge more participation from Latin American women, but was given little encouragement. Despite its lack of representation, Mellencamp reports that the Tbilisi meeting was fruitful ground for generating exchange and contacts. The 90 participants were hosted with considerable hospitability by the Soviet Filmmakers Union and the government of Soviet Georgia. At the meeting, the international group voted for a name and a charter, with the goal of furthering the social, economic, and political rights of women working in the media, to promote international solidarity, and improve opportunities and the presence of women media professionals. Curiously, given that the organization is currently dominated by representatives from developed countries, one of their primary goals is to achieve UNESCO status and funding.

A six-month council was elected to govern the organization, configured at seven representatives from each of seven world regions: Soviet Union; U.S. and Canada; Western Europe; Socialist countries; Africa and the Middle East; Asia and Oceania; Latin America and the Caribbean. Four seats from the U.S. were filled by Mellencamp, Parker, Heller, and Rosenberg, with B. Ruby Rich, director of the Film Program at the New York State Council on the Arts, voted as a member in absentia—although she has not yet agreed to accept the post. Only three Third World seats were filled.

Another two-day meeting was held during the Films des Femmes Festival International in Creteil, France, last March, ostensibly as a follow-up to Tbilisi. There has been confusion as to the official status of the meeting—many of the par-

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ticipants had not been at Tbilisi, and many of the Tbilisi delegates were not at Creteil. (Mellencamp, for example, had no idea the Creteil meeting ever took place.) Women Make Movies executive director Debra Zimmerman, among others, took issue with the lack of representation from women of color, independent filmmakers, and many recognized women's film organizations, and urged the organization to rethink its structure and goals. However, it was decided to push ahead, and a steering committee was elected to look for funding and office space, led by Gogoberidze and Parker with Françoise Audè and Marie Dominique Lelsing of France. New York-based film programmer and critic Bérénice Reynaud will head another steering committee to plan a newsletter, along with Tatiana Zapasnik of the Soviet Union, Colombian filmmaker Monica Esteban, Tanzanian filmmaker Flora M'Bugu-Schnelling, Egyptian critic Ekbal Baraka, and Monique Feldstein and Svetlana Bakhmetieva of France.

According to Reynaud, it was decided that the Creteil festival would host KIWI's third meeting. In theory, the group wanted it in a Third World country, such as upcoming festivals in Carthage, Ouagadougou, or Havana, but did not want to put a "financial burden" on the festivals, and no one from these countries were represented at the meeting anyway. The group also decided that their headquarters should be located in Europe, and a request has been submitted to the National Film Theatre in London for office space and support.

Mellencamp has already begun contacting other U.S. women working in film and video to begin broadening KIWI's scope here. She agrees that the organization is in great need of representation from the South, as well as Black and Chicano women, but there are no specific plans thus far to solicit that representation.

RENEE TAJIMA

NEW ORLEANS' NEW CULTURE CHANNEL

A new arts-oriented programming service debuted February 1 in New Orleans. The Cultural Cable Channel, on Orleans Parish's Channel 49, finally went on air after months of negotiating with franchise owner Cox Cable and the city's Community Access Corporation. The new public access station is now offered as a part of the basic cable service, eight hours daily from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m., with a focus on arts and ethnic heritage programming.

Local public access activists have fought for years to get CCC on the air, according to executive director Mark Sindler. Beginning in 1980, the Cultural Cable Coalition, an ad hoc group of community organizations, launched a lobbying effort for concessions for arts programming during the franchising process. As a result of the drive, Cultural Communications, Inc. was established as the nonprofit, tax-exempt entity to run the separate channel. It was decided by CCI and the Community Access Corporation that the new station would focus on the visual and performing arts, design and creative arts, crafts, architecture, ethnic cultures, and the humanities.

Much of the programming for the cultural channel is produced by local independents who use Cox's public access studio. The franchise company reneged on an earlier commitment to provide CCI with its own production facilities, and the group is now raising funds for its own equipment. At present, the Cultural Cable Channel operates on more heart than dollars, with an annual budget somewhere under $30,000. For more information, contact: Cultural Cable Channel, Box 30498, New Orleans, LA 70190.

RT

CONGRESS SCRAPS CPB BUDGET FREEZE

Despite Reagan Administration efforts, it looks unlikely that Congress will agree to put the freeze on funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Earlier this year, Reagan asked legislators to cut the $228-million already appropriated for FY '89 down to $214-million, and fix it at that level during 1990 and 1991. Meanwhile, CPB has been asking for an increase at four percent a year, from $395-million in FY '91 to $427-million in FY '93, and an extra one-time appropriation of $200-million to replace public broadcasting's satellite system.

Senate hearings on the budget were held on April 13, before the Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies. Only three Senators attended, Lowell Weicker (R-Connecticut), Dale Bumpers (D-Arkansas), and Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), all proponents of public broadcasting. According to Jack Robertiello, a writer for *Current* who covered the hearings, the Senators clearly opposed the Reagan cut, but did not indicate how high the final appropriation would be. Harkin went so far as to call the U.S. dollar commitment to public broadcasting "a shame," comparing Canada's $23 per capita funding to the U.S. appropriation which would be only $1.56 per person per year, even with the proposed CPB increase. As of this writing, the House has yet to hold hearings on the CPB budget, although those are scheduled for April 19.

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THE COALITION

Lawrence Sapadin

THE NATIONAL COALITION OF INDEPENDENT PUBLIC BROADCASTING PRODUCERS GREW out of independent producers' efforts to negotiate with the public broadcasting system before the last Congressional reauthorization in 1984 and has matured to represent the virtual totality of the organized independent producer community.

In 1983, public broadcasting had seen a large portion of its appropriation rescinded by the Reagan Administration. That year, the budget tumbled from a high of about $170-million in 1982 to about $136-million. Independent producers were bearing the brunt of these cuts at the national level, with an increasing portion of national program funds being rerouted to station consortia like *Frontline* and *American Playhouse* rather than being granted directly to producers. Our challenge was to preserve our position within the system without jeopardizing the system's overall funding.

With reauthorization hearings anticipated in early 1984, I made overtures to the CPB Board of Directors in late 1983, expressing a willingness to try to find a negotiated solution to the independent question in order to avoid potentially damaging controversies on Capitol Hill. The board did not respond. However, the same suggestion met with some interest from Paul Symczak, a CPB attorney. Symczak expressed concern that AIVF alone could not adequately represent the diversity of the national production community. Although I disagreed, I suggested that CPB could invite the heads of other major independent and minority producer organizations coast to coast. Much to our surprise, CPB did just that, inviting over 20 producer representatives and media center directors for a meeting in early February 1984.*

In preparation for the unprecedented meeting, I arranged for housing of the producer representatives at the same hotel and reserved a private dining room so that we could confer the evening before the CPB meeting and compare notes from around the nation. Remarkably, there was a consensus on many areas of concern that had been identified by AIVF and other producer advocates. I was asked to serve as chair.

The following morning, we met with then CPB president Ed Pfister and representatives of all of the major public television organizations. As is often the case, the principle agreement was to meet again. The other notable achievement was the public broadcasters' agreement to recognize the group of producer representatives as an Independent Producer Advisory Board. We were to select from among ourselves seven representatives to return to Washington for another meeting.

Seven of us returned to Washington in early March for another meeting with the public broadcasters.** We caucused again the evening before, joined by Larry Hall, a veteran of the successful independent organizing effort in 1978. As we discussed the constituencies we represented, we realized that collectively we represented approximately 10,000 individuals and organizations involved in independent media. Once again, we found ourselves in agreement on a common agenda for our field. Based upon that, we decided to constitute ourselves as a national coalition. However, we were unable to think of a more enticing name than the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers, with its impossible acronym: NCIPBP.

The following day, after a lengthy session with the public broadcasters, we reached an agreement, subject to approval of our respective boards of directors, providing for, among other things, greater independent producer involvement in the panel selection process, the exclusion of *Frontline* from consideration as "independent production," and an increase in the Open Solicitation fund from a pending supplemental appropriation. Unhappily, just days before the first Congressional hearings, the CPB Board rejected major portions of the agreement. The unity we had hoped for in approaching Capitol Hill for increased public broadcasting funding unraveled.

A lasting benefit of the process, however, was CPB's recognition of the Coalition and its agreement to meet regularly with Coalition representatives three times a year to discuss policy and procedure with CPB (occasionally accompanied by station and PBS representatives, as well). While there have been few concrete gains to show for four years of meetings, the regular organized visits to Washington provided a priceless opportunity for the original Coalition members to involve additional independent producer leaders and familiarize them with the complex workings of the public television system, the trade press, and Congressional staff members who follow and influence public broadcasting issues.

In addition to the New York-based AIVF Advocacy Committee, producers in the Bay Area, organized as the Association of Independent Public Television Producers, assumed a leadership role in the discussions of policy and strategy for the coalition. By consensus, Larry Daressa of California Newsreel became co-chair of the national effort.

The course of regular meetings with CPB has led to regional organizations in Boston, Chicago, Atlanta, Los Angeles, and other production centers across the country (in addition to New York and San Francisco), as representatives returned to their homes and held local meetings to educate their constituencies about the developments and trends relating to independents and public broadcasting.

Overall, the National Coalition has succeeded in placing the issues of programming diversity and innovation on the front burner of Congress, public broadcasting, and the trade press, during a period of retrenchment in most other public interest media areas. Regardless of the outcome of the current effort to create a National Independent Program Service, the work of the National Coalition has contributed to the public discourse on the future of public broadcasting, and positioned independent producers to be major players in any future reorganization of the system that may occur.

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* Invited were: Carroll Blue (independent), Frank Blythe (Native American Public Broadcasting Consortium), Joyce Bolinger (Center for New Television), Lawrence Daressa (California Newsreel), Loni Ding (independent), Linda Dubler (IMAGE Film/Video Center), William Greaves (independent), Warrington Hudlin (Black Filmmaker Foundation), Edward Hugetz (Southwest Alternate Media Center), Madison Lacey (independent), Austin Lamont (Boston Film/Video Foundation), Linda Mabalot (Visual Communications), Diane Mark (Asian CineVision), Ruth Pollak (Women in Film), John Reilly (Global Village), Lawrence Sapadin (AIVF), Skip Sweeney (Video Free America), Jesus Trevino (independent), Richard Weise (Film in the Cities), and W.G. Williams (Independent Media Producers Association).

** The negotiating team included: Frank Blythe, Joyce Bolinger, Warrington Hudlin, Linda Mabalot, Lawrence Daressa, John Reilly, and Lawrence Sapadin. W.G. Williams joined the producers later in the day.

The National Independent Programming Service: A Proposal

THE NATIONAL INDEPENDENT PROGRAM SERVICE (NIPS) WILL BE A SEPARATELY funded entity within public broadcasting (or under another appropriate umbrella, such as the National Endowment for the Arts). **It will have the unambiguous mandate to fund the production, acquisition, promotion, and distribution of programs produced by independent film and videomakers to public broadcasting and other markets.**

NIPS will provide a steady stream of high quality, independently-produced programming, supplementing the program mix currently available. **It will help producers gain access to the national program schedule, help public broadcasting achieve its mandate to address the cultural plurality of our nation and reach out to new public television audiences**—ethnic minorities, women, labor, youth, and others whose needs and interests are not well-served by public or commercial television.

NIPS funds will be made available exclusively **to independent producers**—individuals not regularly employed as producers by a public or commercial broadcast entity or film studio—**for independent productions**—programs initiated by an independent producer over which the independent producer has editorial, budgetary and copyright control.

NIPS will be designed to fund principally the work of **smaller independent producers**, those who typically produce single programs, raising funds from grants and/or smaller private investors. NIPS will make it a priority to fund independents whose normal annual independent production budget does not exceed $1.5 million for drama producers and $750,000 for producers of other genres of work.

The NIPS will be administered by an **autonomous board of directors** which will develop policies and procedures for the Service in cooperation with an executive director and professional staff. The board will consist of individuals with a demonstrated commitment to the goals of NIPS. They will reflect the diversity of the American public in terms of age, sex, race, regional representation, and similar factors. Collectively, they will be knowledgable about the richness and variety of independent production—its many genres, styles and concerns. Board members will be educators, critics, exhibitors, programmers, representatives of state and national arts organizations, and community-based users, as well as independent producers.

The NIPS will develop procedures for funding work which will, in most cases, involve the utilization of **peer review panels**. Up to 10 percent of NIPS production monies will be available to the executive director for the commission of work outside the panel process. Panel recommendations will be presumed to be valid. Where the executive director chooses not to follow a panel's recommendations, he/she must provide a timely, written explanation to the panel. An **ombudsman** will review complaints that a funding decision has been arbitrary or capricious.

The NIPS will receive funding amounting to 25 percent of Congressional appropriations to public broadcasting. Of this total, no more than five percent of the NIPS budget will be spent on administration and overhead.

The CPB Program Fund was created at the behest of Congress in 1980 to fulfill many of these goals. **It has failed**. Since the early 1980s, the CPB has largely abandoned efforts to ensure greater diversity and innovation in the national program schedule through the use of work by smaller independent producers. Instead, the CPB has implemented a policy of distributing large block grants to stations and consortia for the production of major series.

These policies necessitate the creation of a new mechanism to address these goals—a National Independent Program Service. Please join with us in making this important new initiative a reality.

Minority Programming Services

MINORITY PROGRAMMING—MOST OF WHICH IS INDEPENDENTLY PRODUCED—MAKES AN essential contribution to the diversity of American public broadcasting and to the breadth of the audience it serves; it constitutes a necessary component of public broadcasting.

As independent producers, we therefore call on Congress to mandate that the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) support **separate minority programming services**, representing the five largest racial and ethnic minorities, thus extending the successful work of the present minority consortia. These services would **commission, acquire, package, distribute, and promote programming reflecting the American minority experience** to the mainstream public television audience and strengthening public television's commitment to programming diversity for minority communities.

We further call on Congress to authorize a **five year grant process** to such autonomous programming services, representative of and responsible to their respective communities. These services would receive **advance, dedicated funding**, significantly in excess of CPB's present commitment to the minority consortia, and accurately reflecting the full presence and diversity of minorities in American life.

Independent Producers and Public Television: An Overview, 1978-1987

INTRODUCTION • IN 1967, CONGRESS ENACTS THE PUBLIC BROADCASTING ACT OF 1967, creating the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), to encourage the growth and development of public broadcasting while insulating it from outside interference and control. However, Congress provides CPB with only a fraction of the funding recommended by the Carnegie Commission on Educational Television that same year, and drops the Commission's proposal for funding the Corporation through an excise tax, relying instead on direct Congressional appropriations. • In 1969, the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) is formed to distribute programming to public television stations nationally. • In 1972, President Richard Nixon vetoes public broadcasting's appropriation in reaction to "controversial" programming. As a result, the system is restructured so that funds are distributed directly to the stations. National programming, especially public affairs, is virtually eliminated. Independents are largely excluded from the system.

1978 • Congress enacts the Public Telecommunications Financing Act of 1978 and directs CPB to promote innovative programming drawn from

diverse sources. Based upon testimony of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), and the organized efforts of the independent and public interest community, Congress mandates that CPB reserve a "substantial" portion of program dollars for independent producers. Congressional sponsors of the bill define "substantial" as meaning at least 50% of available funds. Congress recognizes "smaller independents" as especially deserving of funding and requires panel review for program selection.

1979 • AIVF testifies before the Carnegie Commission on the Future of Public Broadcasting. The Carnegie Report recommends the creation of a Center for Independent Television to fund independent work, establish fair program selection procedures, develop programming formats, and provide a variety of related services for independent producers.

1980 • The CPB Board of Directors creates the Program Fund, intended to provide direct support for independent production. Program Fund director Lewis Freedman says that the Fund will provide marketing, promotion, information, and other services to independent producers, as well as funding. • The Program Fund issues requests for proposals for two series of independent work: *Independent Anthology* (later *Matters of Life and Death*) and *Crisis to Crisis*. The guidelines for *Independent Anthology* encourage producers to "rethink and break through the conventional forms and subjects of broadcasting." Independents submit 900 proposals for the *Anthology* series. After review by readers around the country and a final expert panel, 23 are selected for funding. • Ronald Reagan is elected President. His transition team recommends elimination of federal funding for public broadcasting.

1981 • Under Reagan Administration pressure, Congress cuts CPB's budget from the $200-million previously authorized for FY 1982 and 1983 to $172-million and $137-million respectively. • Seeking alternative financing for public broadcasting, Congress authorizes an advertising experiment permitting several stations to sell product advertisements. AIVF opposes this legislation. • CPB creates five minority consortia, whose primary mandate is to acquire, package, and produce programming for minority audiences.

1982 • CPB announces a $5-million grant to WGBH (Boston) and a consortium of stations for the production of *Frontline*, a prime time documentary series. The series executive producer will select programs without panel review and will exercise full editorial and budgetary control. Nonetheless, CPB states that *Frontline* is independent production. Later in the year, CPB announces the funding of *WonderWorks*, a children's series, again by a multi-million dollar block grant to a station consortium. • CPB cancels *Crisis to Crisis*. • The Public Broadcasting Service refuses to air *Matters of Life and Death* as a series. The series airs erratically and only on some stations. *Crisis to Crisis* is aired as a series, but during the summer and not in prime time. • AIVF protests the loss of broadcast opportunities for independent producers, and the concentration of funding and distribution in favor of station-produced series. • Ron Hull, program manager of the Nebraska Educational Television Network, replaces Lewis Freedman as head of the Program Fund. • By the end of 1982, nearly half of the Program Fund's budget is being distributed to four station consortia for the production of *American Playhouse*, *Frontline*, *WonderWorks*, and *Great Performances*.

1983 • CPB announces the cancellation of *Matters of Life and Death*. The Independent Documentary Fund, a pioneer in funding independent documentaries, is phased out after reductions in its CPB and foundation support. • In response to AIVF protests over the high percentage of funding going to station consortia, CPB announces creation of a $6-million "Open Solicitation Fund" devoted principally, although not exclusively, to independent production. • AIVF urges CPB to negotiate with independent producer representatives to resolve differences prior to Congressional reauthorization hearings in the spring of 1984.

1984 • AIVF Board of Directors approves a legislative position calling for the creation of a Center for Independent Television similar to that outlined in the 1979 Carnegie Report, a clear definition of "independent producer" and "independent production," and an explicit set-aside of at least 50 percent of CPB programming dollars for independents. • In an effort to head off confrontation with independents at Congressional hearings, CPB invites 20 independent producer representatives to Washington in February for negotiations with representatives of CPB, PBS, and the National Association of Public Television Stations (NAPTS), the stations' lobbying arm. CPB agrees to recognize the representatives as the Independent Producers Advisory Board. • A second negotiation session is called for March, at which time the independents announce the formation of the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers (NCIPBP). • Independents and CPB reach an agreement: *Frontline* will not be treated as independent; the Coalition will play a role in selection of panelists; a portion of any increased appropriations will be added to "Open Solicitations" or other independent program formats; and CPB will meet with independents three times a year to discuss policy. The CPB Board subsequently rejects key portions of the agreement, but retains (temporarily) the provisions concerning *Frontline* and meetings with independents. • AIVF testifies before Congress, requesting legislative remedy. Congress declines to amend the legislation as requested by the Coalition, but, in reports accompanying the legislation, reaffirms the importance of independents to public broadcasting, applauds the negotiations and planned meetings, and promises to monitor the situation. • At one of the planned meetings between CPB and independents later in the year, CPB announces that four out of nine seats on each review panel will be reserved for public television station representatives. They refuse to set a similar quota for independent producers.

1985 • CPB and Coalition representatives agree to create a Supplemental Promotion Fund for CPB-funded work, with at least $50,000 reserved for promotion of independent and minority productions. This will remain the only significant achievement of the CPB/Coalition meetings. CPB also consents to increase step-up funding to $200,000, with PBS deciding which programs will receive these funds. • *Frontline* once again appears on the Program Fund's list of funding for independent productions. • CPB President Edward Pfister resigns following a confrontation with the CPB Board, lead by Reagan-appointed Chairperson Sonia Landau, over a planned trip to the Soviet Union to explore the exchange of programming.

1986 • The CPB budget rises to a record $207.2-million in FY 1987, up from $159.5-million in 1986. • PBS and CPB announce a new Challenge Fund, a $24-million, three-year initiative to guarantee the production of new prime time public television series. Proposals for Challenge Fund monies will be reviewed by Program Fund and PBS staff. There is no role for smaller independent producers. • The four program consortia's budgets increase significantly. • Open Solicitations, on the other hand, remains at $6-million. Hull turns down the Coalition's request for a $500,000 increase in Open Solicitations' budget. • The allocation for increased step-up funding instituted the previous year is eliminated and rechanneled into the Challenge Fund. • A committee of the CPB Board proposes that a content review be commissioned to determine whether there is a left-wing bias in documentary programming funded by CPB. • After less than one year in office, CPB President Martin Rubenstein resigns under pressure from the CPB Board. • A discussion paper is circulated by the Association of California Independent Public Television Producers (ACIPTP) within the independent media community, calling for the creation of an autonomous entity within public broadcasting to fund, promote, and distribute independent work for public broadcasting.

1987 • ACIPTP and AIVF's Advocacy Committee work on transforming the ACIPTP's discussion paper into a legislative agenda for the upcoming reauthorization of public broadcasting funding by Congress. ACIPTP compiles a comprehensive analysis of Program Fund grants that reveals a severe decline in direct funding for independent production and a meteoric rise in grants for station productions, co-productions, and series. • Representatives of the Coalition meet and concur on a three-part legislative program: 1. the establishment of an autonomous National Independent Program Service, 2. guaranteed funding for the new service, 3. statutory recognition and guaranteed funding of the five minority consortia.

THE PRESS

Martha Gever

1987 MARKED A YEAR OF CONSIDERABLE PUBLIC ATTENTION TO PUBLIC TELEVISION IN the U.S. The occasion was the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's twentieth birthday—two decades since Congress first authorized a structure and funding for national public broadcasting. Accordingly, CPB can now be pronounced an adult and a legitimate sibling of the commercial television systems that have come to dominate mass media in this country. *Variety*, for example, featured public broadcasting in its September 16, 1987 edition, which included pieces by the presidents of CPB and PBS, as well as numerous reports on various facets of public broadcasting. However, the press coverage celebrating this anniversary was often critical of public television's accomplishments and the directions in which it appears to be headed. As the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers geared up to urge Congress to make reforms that would move public television closer to its mandate to provide diverse and innovative programming to the U.S. public, print journalists writing for large circulation magazines and newspapers like *TV Guide*, *Harper's*, the *Washington Post*, and the *New York Times*, assessed public television's performance and frequently found it wanting. Here are some excerpts from what the press had to say about the problems of public TV in the eighties:

Money, says a producer with experience at some of the Nation's biggest PTV stations, goes "into plant and machinery. It goes into the development staff. It goes into having meetings. It goes into all of the things that do not appear on the screen. Producing programs is a great nuisance for public television stations.... You have to understand that at many PTV stations, the word 'creative' is almost a swear word."

John Weisman, "Public TV in Crisis: Can It Survive?"
TV Guide, August 1, 1987

The constant need for money not only makes it hard on producers and the half-dozen or so stations that package national programming in any quantity, it also more or less dictates much of what gets on the system. According to many of those who produce PTV shows, corporate funding is a form of censorship. Underwriters will put money into those "safely splendid" shows like *Great Performances*, *Masterpiece Theatre* or *National Geographic Specials*, but shy away from controversy and public affairs programs.

[An] award-winning producer, whose generously underwritten programs have run on PTV for more than a decade, explains that, were he to do something controversial, his Fortune 500 Medici would "say, 'OK, do it,'—but after the end of the season, they'd call up and say, '*Sayonara*. It's been fun, but look elsewhere for your money.'

"They don't fund me because of controversy; they fund me because I put them alongside Mom and apple pie and the American flag. And so I won't do controversial shows."

[T]hese days, the concept of public broadcasting as an alternative to the commercial networks is beginning to blur. There is increased emphasis on ratings, even in the smaller markets. Colin Dougherty, general manager of PTV station KMTF in Fresno, Cal., says, "The reality of life is that you have to worry about numbers... because the people who underwrite are concerned with numbers." Says a veteran PTV producer: "I don't get asked how good a prospective program is any more. I get asked what kind of numbers it will do." To get good numbers, some stations are turning away from traditional PTV fare and broadcasting syndicated series.

John Weisman, "Public TV in Crisis: How to Make It Better"
TV Guide, August 8, 1987

[Bill] Moyers's experience [with public television station managers who chose not to air his series on the Constitution in prime time] illuminates a heated debate now being waged within the public television system, a dispute over what public television should be. On one side are the public television traditionalists like Mr. Moyers, who speak of "mission" and argue that their true purpose is to serve narrow audiences with television programs that can't be found anywhere else. On the other side are several influential and increasingly outspoken station managers who believe that if public television is to survive it must change to accommodate the times; they would give television audiences more of what they want to see, rather than what they "need" to see.

"Public television had changed quite a bit in the last 10 or 15 years," says Mr. Othmer, "and Moyers hasn't. The change is that we've gotten, in my opinion, much better. We care a lot more about audience, about being viewed, mainly for two reasons. One is a maturation process. In the early days, all we were concerned with was producing quality programming, and then we began to want people to watch. The second is a straight economic reason. We are increasingly dependent upon viewer support."

"Some professor or court justice talking with Bill Moyers," says Mr. [Raymond] Ho of Maryland Public Television, "may not be compelling enough television to draw significant enough numbers of viewers for these underwriters to show to their boards, which demand their being more cost effective to survive in this new media marketplace. People are not going to throw money away."

...In contrast, one type of public-television show has no trouble at all finding its way to prime time: the nature show.... "Nature" is the most popular series on PBS, and "National Geographic" specials are always a sure ratings winner. Indeed, nature shows have become sort of the sitcom of public television.

John O'Connor, "Public TV: That Delicate Balance"
New York Times, October 25, 1987

Great Performances is made possible, as you know, by a grant from the Exxon Corporation. By untethering programmers from the constraints of product advertisement, PBS delivered itself into a more refined bondage: corporate sponsorship. Public Television could never produce a show that risks even so small a joke as *Max Headroom* because a company as stately as Exxon will not sponsor anything that lacks the pomp and majesty of heavy bronze. The occasional good idea for a program, then, is forced to beg. The producers of the acclaimed civil-rights history, *Eyes on the Prize*, suffered through a five-year pilgrimage to more that three dozen underwriters before making it on the air.

Jack Hitt, "And Now, For Something Completely Cheap"
Harper's, November 1987

The more corporate money public broadcasting accepts, the less able it is to argue for public money. It shoots itself in the pocketbook. When it acts as merely a fourth network serving corporate purposes (albeit run by a different bunch of guys), it has less rationale for asking for public money. If a major purpose of public broadcasting is to be "noncommercial," an alternative to the advertiser-supported incentives that censor commercial broadcasting, it should not be providing a low-price spread for the Fortune 500's advertising dollar. Firms often choose to support public broadcasting because they know that their dollars buy relatively more upscale viewers there than on commercial TV.

Nicholas Johnson, "How Public Is Public Broadcasting Now?"
New York Newsday, November 6, 1987

In a sense, money may be at the source of the system's problems after all. Because of public television's institutionalized mendicant status, more attention is paid to raising money than to spending it wisely once it has been raised. Since public television now depends on the middle-aged and middle brow for their hundred

David Koff and Musindo Mwinyipembe, *Blacks Brittanica*

The struggle in 1982 over *Blacks Brittanica*, a documentary on race, class, and police repression in the United Kingdom, by David Koff and Musindo Mwinyipembe, is now legendary. Despite rigorous and outraged protests from the filmmakers—backed by an international committee in defense of the film—WGBH reedited *Blacks Brittanica* to its liking for broadcast on PBS' *World* series. At the center of the controversy was *World*'s executive producer, David Fanning, who is now the executive producer of *Frontline*.

Courtesy Third World Newsreel



dollar checks, the fare of the system has tended to be more middling as well. The major public television series must attract a wide swath of the "right sort" in order to survive. It speaks volumes about public television that Ivy League football is the only sport regularly carried by the prestigious East Coast stations.

In the arts, the emphasis is on the Barnumesque. The opera broadcasts tend to be spectacular productions of the crowd-pleasing war-horses, virtually never an offbeat production of a standard, and only very rarely anything controversial or new.... Particularly dull are the dramatic treatments of literature. There seems to exist a deep need to tackle the great books, to seem important. Thus one sees dramatizations of *The Scarlet Letter* and *Huckleberry Finn*—competent, yes, but wooden and dispirited alongside the English series made from *Brideshead Revisited* or *I, Claudius* (neither of which appears on most people's list of great English novels).

Everything must be big, and everything must succeed. And it is precisely this that has hampered creativity in public television. Says George Page [director of science and natural-history programming at WNET], "Our biggest problem is that there is no room to fail.... You don't have room to experiment. If even an experienced producer comes up with an idea that's a little offbeat, that doesn't neatly fit into one of the categories—forget it. Unfortunately, being sophisticated in this system means knowing what can be funded, and that means you don't even bother to put forward things on the cutting edge, that might even be a little controversial."

Jamie James, "Expert Witness"
Connoisseur, December 1987

Public television's current gatekeepers might get away with their sophistry and waffling if commercial TV were the only role model available to viewers. But imported programming is regularly demonstrating that the potential for television goes considerably beyond escapist entertainment formulas.

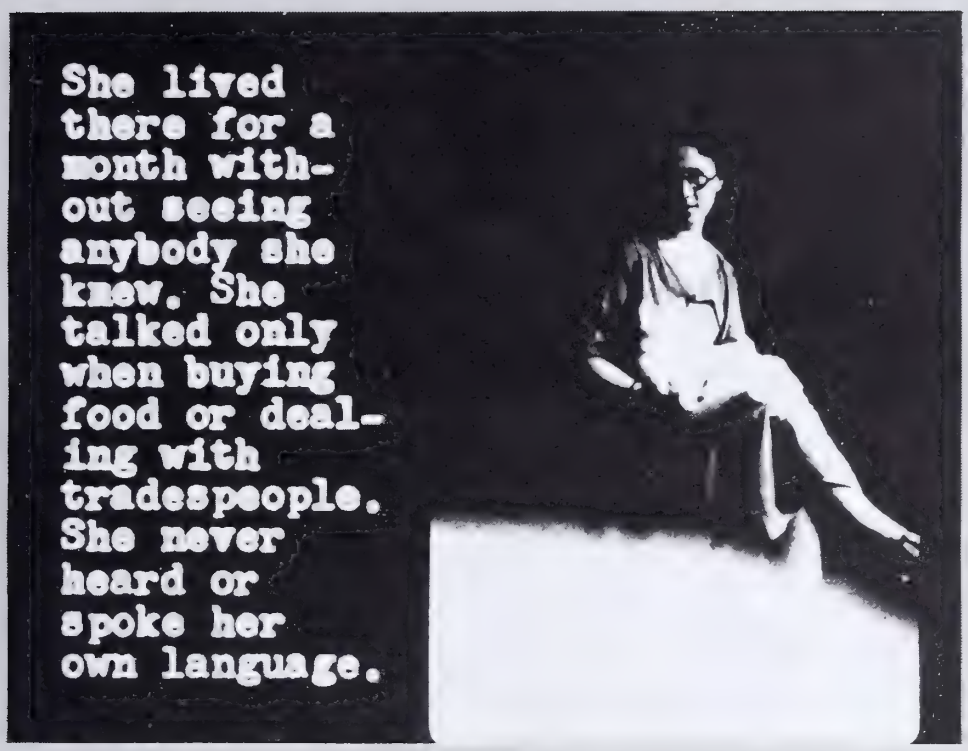
There is, for one prominent example, Britain's Channel Four, which was created specifically by the Thatcher Government to encourage new and distinctive ways of making programs. An Act of Parliament called for a system that would foster, among other things, new approaches to current affairs, films and documentaries from far corners of the world, programs appealing to minority communities, more experimentation with program forms, and, especially, the ability to make openly polemical programs that would defy the conventional concepts of balance and objectivity. The model of the "mass audience" is being replaced with that of a series of "minority audiences" who would be offered far more specialized programs than is the norm on the rest of television.

John O'Connor, "Talking Heads and the Public-TV Pickle"
New York Times, February 14, 1988

Many of the criticisms of public television that were described by these authors were reiterated in an article by Pat Aufderheide that appeared in the January 1988 issue of the *Progressive*, but, unlike the other journalists and critics writing on the subject, Aufderheide is familiar with the difficulties independent producers have had in their dealings with CPB and PBS. Her article, reprinted here, stands out as a useful analyses of public TV's shortcomings.

In her conclusion, Aufderheide recognizes that AIVF is "the most vocal interest group poking at public television today" and urges AIVF to take the lead in creating a broad-based coalition of organizations that would work to make public television more public. Unknown to Aufderheide at the time, AIVF was working with the National Coalition, drafting and building support for a proposal for a National Independent Program Service. Since then, that proposal has been widely circulated and considered central to the discussions about the future direction of public television's structure and funding in the halls, committee rooms, and staff offices of Congress. And AIVF has again rallied its membership to generate grassroots support among independent producers and public interest groups across the country.

Following Aufderheide's article, we have also reproduced the text of a segment of the March 6, 1988 *CBS Sunday Morning* program, written and delivered by Ron Powers (who has since left the show), that reflects the results of some of this work. Powers' commentary, which was aired a few days before the Congressional reauthorization hearings, affirmed the need to recognize independent production as an important but often neglected component of public television in this country.



Yvonne Rainer, *Film about a Woman Who...*

WNET has seen fit to run clips from Yvonne Rainer's films, but neither they nor PBS have ever shown a work by Rainer in its entirety. Excerpts from *Film about a Woman Who...* were included in a WNET special on women in the arts. Rainer was also featured in a half-hour segment of WNET's *Interviews with Filmmakers* series, which included clips from four of her films. However, when Rainer twice approached WNET about programming her work, she was turned down with no explanation. She has never received CPB funding.

Courtesy filmmaker

What Makes Public TV Public?
It Gets Harder and Harder to Tell

Pat Aufderheide

[Ed.'s note: This article first appeared in the January 1988 issue of the Progressive *and is reprinted with the permission of the publisher and author.]*

As you tune in to *Lassie* or *Star Trek, The Honeymooners,* or *The Wild World of Animals*, check your dial. You could be watching public television.

Twenty years ago, when Congress passed the Public Broadcasting Act, it firmly linked the word "educational" to "television." For more than a decade, local educational television had sputtered dispiritedly without catching fire. Legislators created a new body, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), to "improve the facilities and program quality of the Nation's educational broadcasting stations so that this natural resource [the public airwaves] may be used to its fullest for the betterment of individual and community life."

CPB's budget now floats a huge bureaucracy, but it hasn't much to celebrate on its twentieth birthday. The Corporation spends less than a fifth of its budget directly on programming, and only a tiny portion goes to producers. Most flows to station groups, which produce series like *Great Performances* and *American Playhouse*, geared to attract upscale audiences likely to subscribe to the stations' fund appeals.

Don't look to CPB for new directions, either. In the Reagan era, its board was cut in size and packed with ideologically oriented members who fought among themselves and then were left in limbo as Congress and the Administration argued over appointments.

What's appalling about public television today is not that programs are bad. Many are reasonably interesting, especially by comparison with commercial television. It isn't even that the agency has been shaken by the politicization so typical of the Reagan era.

No. What's appalling is that public television has never carved out a distinctive role as an information medium and public forum. Long before Reagan arrived in Washington, public television was a headless horseman. And so it's a ready victim when political and financial crises hit.

Caught in funding contradictions, it is now stuck with an ad hoc mandate to round up the most viewer-subscribers possible to tempt the underwriters of programming. CPB fulfills that mandate with programs that function more like mental interior decoration than compensation for what's missing from advertiser-driven television.

You can see it in the recent resort to commercial reruns like *Lassie*, intended as sugar-coating on more demanding public programming. You can see it in the whiny original series *Trying Times* and in the medium's staple, the nature shows. But if you really want to look at the empty space at the center of public television, look at public-affairs programming.

Consider business shows on public TV—*Adam Smith's Money World* (funders: Metropolitan Life, E.F. Hutton, Unisys); *Growing a Business* (funder: Computerland); *Wall Street Week, with Louis Rukeyser* (funders: Prudential-Bache, Hanson Trust, Primerica). They are on the air not to fill a slot in any news or public affairs editor's idea of responsible coverage, but because of corporate interest in funding business shows. So is it surprising that these shows are aimed at audiences of small investors and not at citizens living under capitalism?

Consider ambitious, expensive documentary series, the kind that, in Great Britain, come out of the profits of commercial channels. This season's *The Health Century* is funded by the American Home Products Corporation, Bristol-Myers, CIBA-GEIGY, Eli Lilly, Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer, Squibb, and other pharmaceutical corporations. It charts the medical conquest of infectious disease, approaches to heart disease such as transplants, and the ways medicine is prolonging life.



Edin Velez, *Meaning of the Interval*

Internationally-renowned video artists like Edin Velez, the producer of the evocative work *Meaning of the Interval*, are not likely to find an outlet on public television. At most, video art productions might be picked up by a few individual stations, generally those serving larger urban markets. But their showcase series are rarely scheduled during prime time, and only a minimal budget, if any, exists for promotion. These costs often come out of the pocket of the independent producer. *Meaning of the Interval* was shown last year on *New Television*, presented by WGBH and WNET in Boston and New York. This year Los Angeles will also get the series through KCET, but the rest of the country will have to do without any *New Television*.

Courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix

Don't tune in to *The Health Century* to hear about the controversy over commoditization of health services. Or the effect of such retailing on the skyrocketing cost of health insurance. Or whether heavy subsidies for organ-transplant research take money and research focus away from public-health programs.

Consider the series *Global Links*, coproduced by the World Bank and WETA, the public station in Washington, D.C. It takes viewers on a whirlwind tour of the Third World, in pursuit of its subject: international development. The idea for this bargain-basement-cheap series came from the World Bank, one of the most controversial development institutions. Its in-house filmmaker Jaime Martin-Escobal wrote, narrated, and directed the whole six-part series and used footage from films he had earlier made for the World Bank.

Recognizing that some might charge conflict of interest, the series producers decided never to mention the World Bank. That's like making a series on lawmaking that never mentions Congress. No wonder the series ended up as a set of platitudes that avoids all the gut issues of international development. But it was cheap.

Consider *The Infinite Voyage*, a twelve-part series on scientific discovery funded by the Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC). This one was expensive. The company didn't want to squander its investment, so the series—which was produced by WQED, Pittsburgh's public station—was resold to commercial stations for airing with DEC advertisements within the same week it played on public television. Taxpayers' money, which built up WQED's facilities and partly pays its salaries, subsidized DEC's very own self-promotion vehicle. Taxpayers' money also gave the program a public television stamp of approval. And all for a four- or five-day lead on its airing on commercial television.

When you see an innovative or hard-hitting documentary on public television, check the source. It may very well come from some other country's public television service, one where the mandate to produce programming on the basis of its public's need to know is taken seriously. *Oil*, the challenging series on the international oil business and politics, was picked up from Norwegian public television. *The Africans*, one of public television's most controversial recent offerings, was originally a BBC project.

Public officials do agonize over conflict of interest when large institutions are eager to fund programming. The Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), the distribution arm of the public stations, refused to give its imprimatur to *Global Links* because the World Bank had coproduced it. Labor unions have repeatedly had run-ins over conflict of interest on public television—and have been far less lucky than corporations in the outcomes. But agonizing is the least of it. The basic decisions are made when programming is matched to underwriting. In the end, it is the questions such programs don't ask that show the emptiness at public television's center.

Officials really tear their hair out with public-affairs programs that don't match up easily with the interests of large corporate or foundation donors. News and documentaries typically get low ratings—and no wonder, since public television has never systematically cultivated an audience. Impoverished public television can encourage, but not bankroll, an offbeat project.

Henry Hampton, producer of the civil rights series *Eyes on the Prize*—possibly the most impressive television documentary of the decade—beat the bushes for funders to mount the series. As he told a Congressional oversight committee, he spent years in "a ritual dance of presentation and review" with public television and had to find forty funders outside the system. Worse yet, his success hasn't made fundraising for the sequel series much easier.

The filmmaker who dares to tackle controversy is expected to prove, and prove again, the scrupulous "balance" of his or her program. PBS refused to broadcast *The Making of Sun City*, a video by Steve Van Zandt, on the making of a music video by Artists United Against Apartheid. PBS argued that it was biased—against apartheid.

Political bias *is* a bedeviling problem. A service partly funded by taxpayers shouldn't be simply a showcase for partisan opinion. But that is effectively what happens when public television programmers abdicate the responsibility for setting a public-affairs agenda. The conventional, the cheaply available, and big-bucks interests set the agenda instead.

If public television executives recognized a mandate to create a public-affairs agenda—to raise and explain controversy—they wouldn't have to depend on program producers to be their own editors and censors. They could look to highly opinionated people (as the programmers at C-SPAN



Howard Petrick, *The Case of the Legless Veteran: James Kutcher*

Howard Petrick's film on a victim of McCarthy era red-baiting, *The Case of the Legless Veteran: James Kutcher*, might have struck too close to home for PBS. The film not only described what happened when a World War II veteran came to be put on the "subversives list," but also examined how the Truman Administration created a atmosphere ripe for witch-hunting, and how liberals contributed to this through self-censorship. After having the film turned down by both WNET and PBS after their initial positive responses, Petrick wryly notes the parallels: At the time Petrick approached PBS in 1981, the Reagan Adminstrative, newly elected and strong, was criticizing PBS for airing "left-wing" programs. PBS reacted by self-censorship, rejecting programming that might be construed as too liberal.

Petrick also conjectures that the archival clips of Ronald Reagan selling Liberty Bonds did not go over well at PBS during this time of peak Reagan support.

Courtesy filmmaker

do) and to investigative filmmakers to sharpen debate and focus understanding of public issues.

Instead, the specter of lost corporate funding and of alienating Congress and highly visible lobbies haunts public television officials. It was a steady drumbeat of hostility from the Right, outraged by the airing of such programs as *Nicaragua...From the Ashes,* that led to the airing of the anti-Sandinista film *Nicaragua Was Our Home,* which was funded by an organization linked to the Reverend Sun Myung Moon. Similarly, Accuracy in Media, the right-wing "media watchdog" group, managed to bully public television into broadcasting a "response" to an unimpeachably balanced series on Vietnam.

Robert Richter, a veteran producer, is still angry about what happened with his *Hungry for Profit,* made through the now-defunct series *Nonprofit TV*. His investigative documentary probed the relationship between growing hunger in the Third World and the global investments of multinational corporations in export agriculture.

One of Richter's targets was megacorporation Gulf + Western, whose Chairman Martin S. Davis denounced the show as "virulently anti-business" to then-president John Jay Iselin of New York station WNET and then withdrew G+W's support for WNET. Davis also implied that, during the production, Iselin had encouraged G+W to refuse interviews for the controversial film, in an apparent attempt to protect a major WNET supporter. A *TV Guide* exposé of public television's problems published last August quotes a WNET source as saying, "We did all we could to get the film sanitized."

It doesn't even help to be a brand name in public-affairs programming. Bill Moyers left commercial television in despair, thinking public television would provide a vehicle for thoughtful public-affairs programs. He raised millions of dollars from private funders, but he has not yet won the battle to get his work a guaranteed prime-time slot on public stations. His series of three-minute reports on the Constitution was nearly sabotaged in a nationwide station fight over the placement of the show. *MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour*, having won a hard-fought battle with local stations to extend its length to an hour, wasn't ready to give up three minutes. Stations weren't going to adjust their schedules either.

Moyers is one of the few people left in public television who argues that the service should respond to the needs of a democratic society, not merely a consumer market. As a one-time White House aide who promoted the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967, he has a longstanding investment in his vision.

"We shouldn't be judging programs by the same Nielsen ratings used by the commercial networks," Moyers told the *New York Times*. "The measure of the mind is not the people meter."

But he is up against such public television leaders as Raymond Ho, president of Maryland Public Broadcasting, who simply doesn't see the difference between commercial and public television. "There's only a good show and a bad show," says Ho.

Congress has held two oversight hearings in honor of CPB's twentieth anniversary, and Senator Ernest Hollings, South Carolina Democrat, may have asked the most searching question. He proposed a user fee on the sales of commercial stations, some of it to go to public broadcasting. His proposal was being beaten up by the National Association of Broadcasters, which was heavily lobbying the Administration.

What Hollings asked the assembled public television officials in that Senate hearing was: Where was their constituency? Why couldn't they fight a corporate lobby with numbers—viewers who would ring their legislators' bells to preserve and defend noncommercial programming? No one answered him. And no one on the panel was there—from organized labor, community groups, supporters of children's television, issue-oriented groups, or the educational community—to say that public television mattered to them one way or the other.

That's less surprising than it ought to be. Public television has found an audience, built around a "safely splendid" notion of programming. But it has lost a mission.

Even "safely splendid" programming does have a mission, of course: a mission to avoid the controversial, a mission to entertain without stooping to vulgarity, and to inform without confronting the assumptions that keep us from knowing the obvious.

That mission boldly affects the look of public-affairs programming, public television's most clearly educational work. It can deliver facts—such as *The Health Century*'s recap of heart-disease research, such as *Global Links*' revelation that people are poor somewhere else in the world, such as

Wall Street Week's insider analysis of the stock market. It is not designed to raise public debate, to ask questions about why our world looks and moves the way it does.

Of course it doesn't. What corporate underwriter would pay for that? How many viewers would write their legislator to protest a controversial film, as opposed to how many would write in to praise one? Spineless as public television officials can be in the face of controversy, you have to feel sorry for them at budget time. But that doesn't have to make you blind to the fact that, within public television, there is no desk where the buck stops for setting a public-affairs agenda.

That's why proposals are afloat to set up endowment-type funding for public television, which would distance the service from the political and financial buffeting that menaces any attempt to mount controversy. That's why the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers has proposed Federal funding for a separate and independent program service. That's why former CPB Program Fund official John Wicklein, now an academic, proposes a whole new institution, more closely resembling the Smithsonian Institution than the Rube Goldberg machine we now have. He envisions within it a national public-broadcasting news organization, in which professional journalists, not underwriters, would make the decisions, and independent producers would get a guaranteed chunk of the money.

The proposals all show that somebody out there still cares about public television's public-affairs potential. But in politics, "somebody" isn't enough. Congress, the only political entity that can shore up the system against its drift toward commercial priorities, shows a stunning lack of interest in picking up a club to beat public broadcasting into a different shape. Public broadcasting is, in the words of one Congressional staffer, a "good guy" in the eyes of constituents. You need a real reason to try to fix something many voters think ain't broke.

The problem goes back to the question Senator Hollings raised in November: Who out there is ready to fight for a better public television system? We know who likes it the way it is: the huge number of people on salary within the current baroque bureaucracy. We know who among the three to four percent of the viewing audience watches it now: disproportionately (and lusciously, for underwriters), upscale viewers. We know what they've come to expect: a service that congratulates them on their good taste.

The future of a public television that's truly public—one whose priorities are set in terms of public interest rather than ratings—depends on political organizing by the groups in America least likely to be heard when corporate funders step up to pay for programming. Such a coalition could bond partisan groups with such mainstream groups as environmental organizations, labor unions, educational organizations, and the American Civil Liberties Union. That's the kind of coalition that came together when the Federal Communications Commission tried to revoke the Fairness Doctrine, setting off an as-yet-unresolved Congressional defense of the rule that says broadcasters can't air just one side of a controversial issue.

A proposal that promises to give public television a distinctive purpose—and, therefore, a chance to survive competition from cable, pay television, and video cassettes—also has a good chance of support from commercial broadcasters. They constitute the business group most heavily invested in public television's staying noncommercial (and thus uncompetitive with them).

Such a coalition could advocate a public-affairs service on public television that looked somewhat the way National Public Radio's news shows sound. It could support dedicated funding for public affairs, for independent productions, for special-events coverage. It would have to argue that public television can't, any longer, dodge its responsibility for public-affairs programming. It would prove its case with the evidence, boldly displayed on today's screen, that if public television doesn't set that agenda, someone else will.

For that to happen, though, such groups need to see the empty space currently at the center of its public-affairs agenda. And they have to share an investment in the creation of a politically sheltered body whose mandate it is to raise questions of public importance unasked by commercial television. The most vocal interest group poking at public television today, the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, has yet to take a lead in seeking out such allies.

At the moment, the blanket of prime time public television programming seems to smother any alternative vision. But the steady slide of public television down the ratings slope, along with changes in the White House in 1988, may yet spur political action among what, in the Reagan era, has come to be termed "the special interests" (a.k.a. anybody but business).

Then we could watch a public television service that accepts the challenge put forth in the 1967 Act, to have the public airwaves serve "the betterment of individual and community life." We'd all argue with the product, and complain about bias. And that would be a healthy exercise of public debate in a democratic society.

Pat Aufderheide is a senior editor of In These Times *and has written extensively on public television for a variety of publications. Her coverage of the subject won her Project Censorship's Investigative Journalism Award in 1979.*

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Morgan Fisher, *Standard Gauge*

With *Alive from Off-Center* now focusing almost exclusively on performance works, PBS has no national venue for experimental films and tapes, such as Morgan Fisher's *Standard Gauge*, a film that recycles film leader and other material from the cutting room floor while Fisher ruminates on his experiences with the film industry. Although recognized by the Whitney Museum of Art in its prestigious Biennial exhibition, included in the 1988 International Public Television Screening Conference lineup, and programmed for WNET's *Independent Focus* series, *Standard Gauge* is among the many experimental works not visible on national PBS. Nor is there a place within CPB's Program Fund categories that encourages or is hospitable to such nonconventional approaches or formats.

Courtesy WNET

CBS Sunday Morning Report

Ron Powers

About 20 years ago, a lofty mission was launched in America, and it offered the promise of television as the Founding Fathers might have programmed it: literate, questioning, disputatious, bursting with ideas, unabashedly flag-waving over the nation's best artists and musicians and playwrights. That was 20 years ago. And the mission was called the Public Broadcasting System.

PBS was a brainchild of President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society—a vast video storehouse of culture and social journalism, its robust independence guaranteed by unconditional funding from large foundations and the government itself.

At least, that was the theory. Has it worked in practice? Well, in just a few days that question will be debated in Congressional hearings. The 20-year-old Public Broadcasting Act is up for reauthorization this year, and it's clear that at least part of what Congress will be hearing in these coming weeks is a litany of a mission failed.

Make no mistake. PBS does provide some of the finest television programs available in America, particularly in nature, in science, and in the performing arts. And yet, the picture is incomplete. These very programs tend to illustrate the charge most often leveled at PBS: that it has become too respectable, too safe, too timid, too conscious of its upper-middle-class pledge donors and of the big corporations that now dominate much of public television's funding. Put most bluntly, there's a perception that the Public Broadcasting System has replaced its lofty founding mission with a new one—a mission merely to survive.

Exaggeration? Well, consider this. Some public stations around the country have taken to showing reruns of *Lassie* and *Leave It to Beaver*. Other more serious-minded stations have been rerunning *The Avengers*. Some public station managers speak very glibly now about the need for high ratings, about how it's OK to compete with commercial television for mass audiences. Surely, this is not what the founders of the Public Broadcasting System had in mind when they talked about mission. But if *Lassie* is not the mission of public broadcasting, what is?

Here's an example of what Americans are *not* seeing on PBS, at least not very often: tough, probing video journalism created by independent filmmakers and producers who number more than 4,000 in America [excerpts shown from *When the Mountains Tremble*, and *Resurgence: The Movement for Equality vs. the Ku Klux Klan*, both films by Skylight Pictures (Peter Kinoy, Tom Sigel, and Pam Yates)].

Independent producers are lobbying for a bigger share of PBS program funds, not to mention more airtime for their products. Their claim is that this is exactly the sort of bold, provocative, risk-taking television that was envisioned by the creators of PBS 20 years ago. They have a very strong point.

The independents want guaranteed money, airtime, and freedom from pressure to conform to mainstream tastes. Not surprisingly, PBS insiders find these requests outlandish and unreasonable. No doubt they are. How utterly refreshing. Let's face it. American public television is in dire need of a little outlandishness just as Americans are in need of unorthodox, even unpopular, points of view from the mavericks and the outriders of public information. That need has existed since the days of the Founding Fathers. It may never have been more acute than in these days of compression and dreary conformity.

Here's hoping those Congressional subcommittees will listen this week to the voices who are cautioning about a failed mission in public television. The time has long since passed when PBS can simply *Leave It to Beaver*.

Ron Powers' commentary, which appeared on March 6, 1988, is reprinted with the permission of CBS Sunday Morning.

THE HEARINGS

Andrew Blau

Most organized attempts to improve public television's relationship with independent producers have focused on Congress rather than on local stations or the other institutions that comprise what we know as public TV in this country. Such a strategy is based on the particular structure of noncommercial television in this country and Congress' key position within it. To understand why this approach is necessary, it is essential to outline the workings of that system and the various relationships between public TV institutions and government.

Noncommercial programming reaches our TV sets by a far more tortuous route than most people imagine. For instance, most people believe that PBS is a noncommercial network of stations where we tune in to *Sesame Street*, *Nova*, and *The MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour*. There is no noncommercial *network*, or anything called the Public Broadcasting *System*. PBS stands for Public Broadcasting *Service*, and the use of the word "service" is indicative of the the difference between PBS and, say, NBC. In fact, PBS is part of a larger public television structure that consists of three major components: CPB, PBS, and 322 local public TV stations. It's a bureaucrat's dream: inefficient, confusing to everyone, an institutionalized morass.

The Public Broadcasting Act of 1967 chartered the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, an independent, nonprofit organization intended to facilitate the development of public television and radio, as well as shield the stations from political interference and outside control. In compliance with the 1967 Act, CPB's board of directors are nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate. The entire enterprise is funded through the federal budget. However, CPB is not a government agency, but a quasi-governmental organization along the lines of Amtrak, the Smithsonian Institute, or the Legal Services Corporation. In its own promotional literature, CPB describes its general purpose: "[W]e support program production in both radio and television, offer grants, training and technical assistance to stations and others in the system, and coordinate planning and future policy development for the public broadcasting community."

The annual federal appropriation for CPB is subsequently split into several pools of money that help determine the shape of U.S. public television. A small portion—around 10 percent—is allocated for administrative costs and interconnection expenses, e.g., their satellite. Of the remaining 90 percent, three-quarters is devoted to television and one-quarter to radio. The majority of television funding is funneled directly as Community Service Grants (CSGs) to the stations, which in 1987 accounted for about 65 percent. This major source of funding for public broadcasting dates back to 1969, and remains the primary vehicle for transferring federal money from CPB to stations, which CPB says is used "mostly for programming." In effect, however, these grants are unrestricted gifts to stations that can be used as they see fit.

About 17 percent of CPB's television money goes to the Program Fund. Created in 1980, the Program Fund is what its name implies—a centralized fund for national program production. The Program Fund is composed of three divisions responsible for three major categories of programs—public affairs, dramatic productions, and cultural and children's programming. While CPB funds some programs, CPB does not produce them. Program production remains in the hands of stations, station consortia, independent producers, and a variety of other sources, notably the BBC, Grenada TV, and other off-shore sources of English-language programming.

When CPB was created, some feared that the government was installing a "fourth network," so Congress prohibited it from operating any interconnection between the stations that would allow CPB to simultaneously finance programs and direct stations to coordinate broadcasts. Nevertheless, coordination seemed desirable, so in 1969 CPB established PBS, a private membership organization financed and controlled by its member stations. PBS operates the interconnection and promotes, schedules, and distributes programs. But it is not a network. It makes programs available to member stations, but does not dictate when, or even if, they will be aired. Each station controls its own schedule, and, thus, the argument goes, it remains responsive to the local needs of the community.

If this structure seems convoluted, inefficient, or absurd, that's the first sign that you understand how it works—or doesn't. As former PBS President Lawrence Grossman has said, "What you've got today is a Rube Goldberg structure involving the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the agency that receives Federal funds but cannot produce programming or set program schedules; and PBS, the television network that wrestles with the schedule but cannot produce programs.... It is a system no one in the outside world understands or can penetrate."

Because it is a quasi-governmental body, created by an act of Congress, and receives federal funding, CPB is periodically subject to Congressional review. The workings of Congress allow for three forms of public scrutiny: 1. the legislation that created the present structure must be amended every three years to set funding ceilings for the subsequent three year funding cycle, e.g., the 1988 reauthorization legislation will set levels for 1991 through 1993; 2. the amounts authorized are subject to review by the subcommittee that controls the CPB appropriation; 3. Congress can call a special oversight hearing to broadly investigate the performance of public broadcasting. The last six months have provided examples of all three kinds of hearings.

Last fall, both the House and Senate announced they would hold special oversight hearings on the occasion of public broadcasting's twentieth anniversary to assess its performance during those two decades and chart its future. The oversight hearings were also convened as a forum that would create a record for reauthorization hearings, which were held this March. The hearings for the 1991 appropriation took place in mid-April. However, before proceeding with an account of these recent events, a short review of the machinery of our federal legislature is in order.

Congressional hearings are functions of committees and subcommittees of both chambers of Congress. Every representative and senator sits on one or more committees, and membership on a standing committee also entails assignment to one of its subcommittees. In the House, telecommunications is the province of the Subcommittee on Telecommunications and Finance, composed of 24 members, with Edward Markey (D-Massachusetts) currently serving as chair. Subcommittee members are selected from the Energy and Commerce Committee's 42 members, chaired by John Dingell (D-Michigan). In the Senate, Ernest Hollings (D-South Carolina) chairs the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, with 20 members. Eleven members of this committee also sit on the Subcommittee on Communications, chaired by Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii).

Legislation may be introduced by any member of Congress, but the norm



Curtis Choy, *The Fall of the I-Hotel*

***The Fall of the I-Hotel*, by San Francisco filmmaker Curtis Choy, is an alternately stark and lyrical documentation of one of the most emotional events in Asian American history: when thousands of activists formed a human barricade around the Manilatown hotel to prevent the eviction of its elderly Asian tenants. It was a natural for inclusion in *Silk Screen*, the Asian American public television series packaged by the National Asian American Telecommunications Association. But PBS rejected the film, calling it inappropriate for the series, or for national prime-time airing. Asian Americans would have to find other venues for remembering this landmark in their own history.**

Courtesy Third World Newsreel

is for a bill to be referred for review and "mark up" to the subcommittee which deals with the issues addressed in the bill. Therefore, oversight and reauthorization hearings will be held by the subcommittees named above. In addition to gathering documents related to a particular bill, the subcommittees' staffs also invite testimony from people who are considered especially knowledgeable, represent one of the parties affected by the legislation, or are believed able to contribute some significant information to the public record on the issue in question. Following hearings, and if the subcommittee approves it, the bill is recommended to the full committee, which then reviews it, makes modifications if necessary, and then—if it is voted out of committee (approved)—sends it to the floor—that is, to the full chamber. There it is sometimes debated again, and approved or defeated. Once the process is completed in one chamber, it must be repeated in the other. When both House and Senate have approved related bills, any differences between the two versions are then worked out by a conference committee before the compromise goes to the President, who can either sign it, thereby enacting it as law, or veto it, at which point the bill returns to Congress, which can override the veto.

When the Senate and the House convened hearings on public broadcasting last October, no legislation was on the table, nor was any specific action expected. This was only oversight—an opportunity for representatives from CPB, PBS, the National Association of Public Television Stations (NAPTS, the trade association and lobbying arm of public TV stations), and National Public Radio to answer Congress' questions about the state of public broadcasting. Critics of public broadcasting were also invited, including independent producer Loni Ding and former program officer for news and public affairs at CPB John Wicklein, as well as people who have worked with CPB and PBS but are not employed by public TV, such as Henry Hampton, producer of *Eyes on the Prize*.

Unlike oversight, the reauthorization hearings in March considered legislation before the subcommittees, whose members will decide whether to preserve the present structure of public broadcasting or modify it, and how much money to give it. Because any public broadcasting bill involves funding, yet another committee is implicated in the process, and that brings a third set of hearings. Spending decisions in both chambers are controlled by Appropriations Committees, which also have subcommittees respon-



Haile Gerima, *Ashes and Embers*

CPB officials in the Program Fund's Drama and Arts division asked filmmaker Haile Gerima to come in and talk with them during a period when they were interested in getting more black filmmakers to apply. However, CPB never funded any of his projects, although the Rockefeller Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the U.K.'s Channel Four all considered his work worthy of support. *American Playhouse*—the only place in the national PBS schedule where independent dramatic features might appear—rejected Gerima's *Ashes and Embers* because of what they deemed foul language. But they never even suggested bleeping out phrases—a practice that has occured with other works on the series.

Courtesy Third World Newsreel

sible for public broadcasting legislation—in this case, Subcommittees on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education. In the House this subcommittee is chaired by William Natcher (D-Kentucky) and in the Senate by Lawton Chiles (D-Florida). At that stage, proponents and opponents of authorized funding testify on the amounts in question, and the Appropriations Committees have the power to either approve or cut funds authorized by other committees.

In the course of congressional hearings, testimony is delivered both in writing and orally. The length of written testimony—which may contain appendices with graphs, charts, tables, and other devices to bolster arguments and make a case—varies, whereas oral presentations usually must conform to firm guidelines. Public testimony at congressional hearings is often conducted with panels structured according to related interests. For example, the heads of CPB, PBS, NAPTS, and NPR may be grouped as a panel representing the major institutions within public broadcasting. Each person is allowed about five minutes to make a statement. When each panel's testimony is concluded, subcommittee members take turns questioning panelists. Not all members attend subcommittee hearings, and sometimes only one subcommittee member will sit through the full hearing, while others come and go according to their interests and schedules.

Reproduced below is the written testimony submitted to the House and Senate subcommittees by independent producers and representatives of the NCIPBP, as well as a statement made by House subcommittee chair Edward Markey at the reauthorization hearings held on March 10. In his opening remarks Markey announced his sponsorship of H.R. 4118, which, for the first time, defines an independent producer as someone "who is not affiliated with the Corporation [for Public Broadcasting], Public Broadcasting Service, or a public or commercial broadcasting licensee, or any consortium...in a manner which would require or permit such Corporation, Service, licensee, consortium, affiliation or entity to exercise editorial control over such a production." Following Markey, Representative Michael Oxley (R-Ohio) castigated the programming practices of some public TV stations, noting that public TV "increasingly offers programming...that mirrors the commercial culture from which public TV was once meant to deliver viewers." Bill Richardson (D-New Mexico) expressed concern that "controversial issues are not getting the coverage they deserve." He also observed that "the stations in the system are loath to provide" minority programming and hiring.

Before the independent representatives testified, a panel consisting of CPB President Donald Ledwig, NAPTS president David Brugger, PBS President Bruce Christensen, and NPR President Douglas Bennet predictably asked the subcommittee members to support legislation in favor of increased federal funding for CPB. Equally predictably, they all opposed the proposal for a National Independent Programming Service. In his written testimony, Ledwig argued that independent producers have actually increased their share of CPB program funding between 1976, when they received less than five percent, to 1986, when, he asserted, they received 47 percent. He went on to say that independents' insistence on increased funding would be addressed if CPB were given more money. The subcommittee then heard independent producer Pamela Yates and National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers co-chair Lawrence Daressa, who spoke about their difficulties with distribution through the public television system and argued on behalf of a National Independent Program Service. At the close of the morning's session, Al Swift (D-Washington), a senior Democrat on the subcommittee, indicated his reluctance to support legislative changes and instructed the independents and public television representatives to make efforts to resolve their differences.

The Senate hearing took place the following week, on March 15. Speaking for public broadcasting were the same institutional representatives that had testified in the House: Ledwig, Christensen, Bennet, and Brugger. They were joined by Lawrence Sapadin, Frederick Wiseman, and Marlon Riggs from the ranks of independent producers and their representative organizations. Another panel was convened to discuss the concerns of programmers who provide programming on the system, CPB's criteria for funding community radio stations, and the relations between the Hispanic community in the U.S. and public broadcasting. Alfred Vecchione, president of MacNeil/Lehrer Productions, and David Britt, president of Children's Television Workshop, spoke as program producers; Lynn Chadwick, president of the National Federation of Community Broadcasters, and Arnoldo Torres, director of Latinos in Public Telecommunications, each spoke about their respective constituencies.

As the first order of business at the hearing, subcommittee chair Inouye announced his sponsorship of S. 2114, the Public Telecommunications Finance Act of 1988. The bill designates funding levels for CPB from 1991 through 1993 and authorizes $200-million for replacing the present satellite

Med Hondo, *Sarraounia*

African feature film series have fared well in Washington, D.C. theaters over the past five years. As an outgrowth of series organized by Positive Productions, board member and filmmaker Haile Gerima submitted a proposal to PBS' Station Program Consortium in 1985 and again in 1987 after *The Africans* aired. Gerima's proposal for *Third Eye* described the series as being a 12-part "introduction to the world of African film and filmmakers," with in-depth discussions by filmmakers, historians, and critics. Both times PBS rejected *Third Eye*. Not only is African feature filmmaking invisible on public television, but so too are films from Asia and South America—not to mention feature productions by Native Americans, Blacks, Hispanics, Asian Americans, and others within our own country.

Courtesy Mypheduh Films



interconnection system. Although this bill lacks the definition of independent production contained in the parallel House measure, Inouye noted that the subcommittee had received a substantial amount of mail on this subject and requested responses from Ledwig and Christensen to Markey's definition. Both indicated their opposition to the proposal, and Christensen went so far as to argue that the definition in the House bill would be "counterproductive."

On the second panel, following Chadwick's testimony about the difficulties faced by numerous public radio stations that have too little income or too few staff members to qualify for federal assistance, Britt argued on behalf of greater funding for CPB in order to increase production of children's and educational TV. Vecchione, president of the company that produces what he called "the biggest program in public television" with "the biggest slice of air time" and "the biggest budget," said that he thinks "the system for selecting programs and allocation money is a democratic one" and has created a "mostly alternative" program schedule. When Inouye subsequently asked him if *The MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour* uses independent producers, he admitted "not very much anymore." Although MacNeil/Lehrer originally considered independents as a source for "a more diverse base of journalism," Vecchione told the subcommittee, "It became quite unruly in the case of independent producers to get them to produce things according to our standards.... They see things in a way that journalistically does not mesh with the way we see them."

Torres, who represents an organization formed, in part, to deal with Latino issues in public broadcasting, lashed out against the system's insensitivity to the needs of the Latino population in this country, which he said only amounted to "lip service." Instead of CPB, PBS, and NPR patting themselves on the back for hiring some Latino managers or producers, he recommended that public broadcasting institutions make "a strong commitment to actually diversifying their programming...by having a staff of people that are diverse in their perspectives." Torres advised the subcommittee to include language in the reauthorization bill that would direct NPR and CPB to maintain Spanish-language programming based on ongoing assessments of the interests and needs of the Latino community.

Each witness on the third panel—composed of independent producers Wiseman and Riggs as well as NCIPBP co-chair and Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers' executive director Sapadin—delivered his testimony, but little time remained for questions. However, Inouye gave the three panelists a chance to affirm their agreement with the definition of independent production spelled out in the House bill. Inouye also submitted questions in writing to the panelists and, echoing Markey's strategy in the House, he urged that CPB, PBS, and NPR meet with the various spokespeople on the second and third panels to discuss differences and reach "some sort of public accord on matters that we have discussed."

In retrospect, the strength of the testimony by independents at both House and Senate hearings and the obvious interest in the issues they raised among important members of both subcommittees, have strengthened the hand of independents in negotiations with CPB. The strategy of taking the case directly to congressional oversight bodies and demanding legislative action significantly improves independents' chances for making that system live up to its promise and Congress' original vision.

Andrew Blau analyzes communications policy for the United Church of Christ's Office of Communication. He also edits the Telecommunication Consumer Coalition Newsletter.

The House

Subcommittee on Telecommunications and Finance
Energy and Commerce Committee March 10, 1988

Representative Edward J. Markey
Subcommittee Chair

OPENING STATEMENT

GOOD MORNING. WE ARE HERE TODAY TO CONSIDER REAUTHORIZATION LEGISLATION for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Since the passage of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting Act of 1967 more than 20 years ago, the Congress has been a consistent supporter of public broadcasting. Just three years ago, the Congress passed legislation increasing the authorization for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting from $162-million for fiscal year 1986 to $245-million for fiscal year 1990, an increase of more than 50 percent during that period. I am proud that today we will consider legislation which would ensure that the public broadcasting system receives sufficient funding through 1993.

Last November, we held hearings in which various representatives of the public broadcasting community discussed their views of the success of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in meeting the mandate of the Congress outlined in the legislation which created CPB. It was clear then, as it is equally clear today, that public broadcasters offer American viewers and listeners much that is stimulating and enlightening, a diverse mix of programming one observer called "the reverent and the rude, the disciplined and the rambunctious—a celebration of American freedom in all its unpredictable varieties." However, it is equally clear that the public broadcasting system is not meeting its mandate in other areas.

In my remarks before the hearings last fall, I compared public broadcasting to a bright child who brings home grades of B and C. How can we encourage the child to get As? We do so, I'm convinced, by pointing out and rewarding what the child is doing right and identifying and encouraging changes in what the child is doing wrong.

What is public broadcasting doing right? It is delivering a product which is impressive in its quality and commitment to a varied audience. From *Frontline* to *Square One TV* to *All Things Considered*, viewers and listeners have come to expect informative and entertaining programming from public broadcasters. We need to ensure that the Corporation for Public Broadcasting continues to encourage and support this kind of programming.

To do so, the public broadcasting system must receive sufficient funding to continue to deliver, free of charge to its audience, the type of product one cannot hope to get from commercial television or radio. Funds must continue to be available to support the production and distribution of programs which are innovative and sensitive to the needs of various audiences, but which are not subject to the ratings frenzy which so often leads to a steady diet of situation comedies, made-for-TV movies, and top 40 radio programs which have become standard fare on commercial stations. We will be particularly interested in assessing the extent to which the authorization levels contained in H.R. 4118 are appropriate for maintaining, and enhancing, the quality of public broadcasting in this country.

Public broadcasting will be able to deliver that programming most efficiently and in a timely manner only so long as it has a satellite delivery system that is functioning and capable of accommodating the latest in broadcast technologies. The current satellite will go dark in 1991; today we will discuss the amount of money needed to ensure that the satellite interconnection system is maintained into the twenty-first century.

We will also discuss the need for federal support for the construction and maintenance of public broadcasting facilities. The Congress has consistently supported the Public Telecommunications Facilities Program in order to ensure the continued expansion of the public broadcast system to areas previously not served. Though we are near to the goal of making public broadcasting available to all Americans, we must continue to provide funding to fill the remaining gaps and update the maintain existing facilities.

If the public broadcasting system has earned high marks for providing a source of programming not available from commercial broadcasters, and for developing a system of program delivery so innovative and efficient that it was later copied by commercial broadcasters, the marks are not so good when we consider the needs of the independent production community.

Increasingly, I am troubled by the continuing problems independent producers have when they seek access to the public broadcasting system. Ten years ago, the Congress passed legislation to ensure that independents receive serious and fair consideration from the CPB when decisions are made to fund program production. However, independent producers continue to protest that they are not receiving the consideration—and the money—the Public Telecommunications Financing Act of 1978 intended. It is our task to determine if a substantial legislative remedy is necessary. The legislation we consider today begins to correct the problem by defining independent producers and independent productions—a necessary step to make sure that all parties involved are on the same wavelength in addressing this frustrating problem.

I am also working to craft a proposal that would forge a new working relationship between the public broadcasting system and the independent production community. If public broadcasting in the United States is to be a source of truly diverse and innovative programming, we must ensure that *all* program creators have adequate opportunities to compete for the funds necessary to develop quality programs.

Public broadcasting, which has offered so much to the American people for over 20 years, is not all that it could be. Lawrence Grossman recently wrote: "When the history of American television is written, public TV will be largely a footnote." I hope and expect that those here today will recognize and acknowledge the accomplishments of the public broadcasting system, but also work together to make it more fully realize the ambitions of its founders and of its audience.

Pamela Yates
Independent Producer

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE, I APPRECIATE THIS OPPORTUNITY to address you from the perspective of an independent producer on the relationship of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, independent producers, and the works they create for public television.

BACKGROUND WITHIN THE TELEVISION AND MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRIES

I have worked within the television and motion picture industry for the past 12 years. I currently work as an independent producer/director and a location sound engineer. I am president of a small New York-based production company, Skylight Pictures. We have produced independent documentaries, worked for the major television networks, and on major motion pictures. Our production, *Witness to War*, won an Academy Award for Best Documentary in 1985. We were producers on *CBS Reports: Guatemala,* which won a national Emmy and the Peabody Award for Television Journalism. Working as independents in Central America, we shot the very first footage of the contras in 1983, which became part of our award-winning film *Nicaragua: Report from the Front*. In addition we have worked on major motion pictures such as Oliver Stone's *Platoon* and *Wall Street* and the George Lucas/Haskell Wexler production *Latino*.

Although I have a depth of experience within both the commercial broadcasting systems and the feature industry since 1979, I have chosen to work as much as possible as an independent filmmaker, in the area of public affairs documentary. I have chosen to produce programs which are of deep personal interest to me and which tell stories which might not be told otherwise. I have taken the path of "independent" in these productions because I wanted to insure that I would be able to retain a high degree of control over the final production. Independents in public affairs programming have often been able to get the stories which their mainstream commercial counterparts have been unable to uncover. While the world's press sat with their hands ties by South Africa censorship, independent producer Sharon Sopher recorded and brought to light the story of the torture of children in that country. Barbara Kopple spent four years living with her subjects, the coal miners of Appalachia, to make the Academy Award-winning *Harlan County, U.S.A.*. In 1983, when no western news crew had been able to document the existence of the contras and the "covert war," we were able to film not only "secret" contra bases but also were able to walk with a contra column from Honduras into Nicaragua to film actual combat between the contras and Sandinistas in the inaccessible mountainous border area.

THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING BEGAN AS A STRONG SOURCE OF SUPPORT FOR INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION.

I first became involved with public television in 1980 when I received support from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for a program called *Resurgence: The Movement for Equality vs. the Ku Klux Klan*. This was to be part of a series called *Matters of Life and Death*. It seemed to me and the independent community that CPB was on its way to fulfilling its mandate that, in order to promote diversity and innovation, a "substantial" portion of its dollars be distributed to independents for program production. *Resurgence* was my first film, and it was a credit to the streamlined application and selection process that CPB was willing to take a chance on a first-timer based solely on the strength of an idea and approach. At that time the selection process was carried on by a peer panel which was comprised in its entirety of filmmakers and representatives of their organizations.

Resurgence was completed, not without a certain amount of personal danger, like when we were taken blindfolded to an isolated cabin to interview several Klansmen who had been indicted for murder. The film went on to open at the New York Film Festival and win a Blue Ribbon at the American Film Festival. It also established my beginnings in the precarious world of independent filmmaking. However, its life on PBS was not so successful.

DISORGANIZED DISTRIBUTION CHARACTERIZES PBS' HANDLING OF INDEPENDENT PROGRAMS.

Matters of Life and Death, the series of 13 half-hour public affairs documentaries, never found national release on PBS. Instead the programs were split up and run piecemeal, often as filler in otherwise unusable time slots. While various reasons for this programming failure have been put forward, the majority of independently produced, single public affairs programs have since then been broadcast piecemeal and in generally inaccessible time slots.

The series *Matters of Life and Death* was dropped after one year, as was a series of independently produced public affairs programs entitled *Crisis to Crisis*. In its place, CPB opted for funding of station originated programs and series, like the WGBH production *Frontline*. In 1982, when I began to produce a program on Guatemala, I was told my request would have to go through *Frontline*.

At first *Frontline* became the repository for all requests for support on public affairs documentaries and went on to produce some outstanding programs. However, the criteria for independent production was lost in the process. No longer was there a peer panel selection process. At *Frontline* one executive producer made all the choices. Secondly, the shows had to fit into the *Frontline* format, with the station having ultimate control over the completed project. *Frontline* was not interested in my Guatemala project at that point and I was left to seek support outside of the public television system.

Six months later the Corporation for Public Broadcasting resumed support for non-station affiliated programs by accepting Unsolicited Proposals. Finally at the end of 1982, halfway through an arduous production, the Guatemala program received completion funding through the Unsolicited Proposal process. This resulted in the program *When the Mountains Tremble*, a 90-minute special on Guatemala.

When the Mountains Tremble received a quarter of its budget from CPB while the remainder of the $200,000 had to be raised through small donations from dozens of different donors. The film, despite a very successful theatrical release in over 40 U.S. cities and 25 foreign countries and the timely nature of its current affairs content, took over two years from the time of its completion to find its way onto PBS. During that time my hands were tied from taking the program to any other broadcast outlet, since PBS owned exclusive broadcast rights. Once the program had been accepted for air it took a national letter-writing campaign before the program was scheduled. Then, on the eve of its press broadcast the program was pulled. It was felt by the PBS programmers that the content of the program was "too controversial" for consumption by the local stations. It was finally broadcast with a half-hour studio follow-up discussion which cost as much to produce as CPB had contributed to the entire 90-minute program. Because there was no "corporate" underwriting for publicizing the show, we had to set aside our roles as filmmakers and, at our own expense, coordinate national publicity for the program. PBS in Washington couldn't even tell us where and when the program was scheduled in the different cities. We had to telephone close to 100 stations to find out their air date and then personally alert local press in those cities to review the program.

THE DECLINE OF SUPPORT FOR INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION

After 10 years of retrenchment at both CPB and PBS it is more difficult now



Peter Adair, *Some of These Stories Are True*

PBS' obsession with "objectivity and truth" was tested by Peter Adair's *Some of These Stories Are True.* The work, funded following a Program Fund peer panel's recommendation, was rejected from the *Matters of Life and Death* series in 1982. Adair's production explored and critiqued the concept of truth on television. In it, Adair strings together three stories relating to the psychological dimensions of male violence, sexuality, and power. Until the credits roll, the viewer does not know which one of the three stories is actually fictitious. At least one CPB executive was incensed by the film, calling it "the most immoral television I've ever seen," because of the "trick" of not being told which story is not true until the end. Kurosawa, beware: *Rashomon* may be in for a wraparound.

Photo: Gayle Peabody

for experienced, award-winning documentary producers to get support than it was for first-time, untested producers to get support 10 years ago. Small independent producers are not being funded for productions while more and more of the production money is being channeled through stations for series or specials. In the rare event that independent producers have been able to raise the money and produce high-quality programming without the support of CPB or PBS, their experience in offering this programming to public broadcasting is shocking. PBS has refused to broadcast programs unless the producers can come up with the necessary "step-up" money to defray broadcast costs. In other words, instead of being paid a fair market price for valuable programming, the independent producer can end up paying to have their work broadcast on public television. The promise to develop, support, stimulate, utilize, and create an audience for diverse independent work, which was held out when I first became involved with public television in 1980, has sadly faded.

THE SYSTEM CAN BE REVITALIZED.

I now fear that the funding and programming apparatus of CPB can no longer insure the continuance of its original Congressional mandate. At stake here is not only the quality of programming on public television, but the survival of the independent public affairs documentary as a legitimate expression of the free exchange of ideas. Where will the next generation of independent filmmakers come from?

When I was able to able to produce *Resurgence* as a first time filmmaker through the then newly created Program Fund's *Matters of Life and Death* series, it launched my career as a film producer which continues to this day. But as the money dwindles and public access diminishes for independents, who will believe in the young, the minorities, the up-and-coming filmmakers with fresh ideas who may never get a chance to produce their first project? What effect will this exclusion have on the future of Public Broadcasting's ability to respond to a democratic society and not just the consumer market?

I and many independent producers now believe that the formation of the National Independent Programming Service (NIPS) is essential to the ongoing creation of innovative programming for public broadcast. Innovation and diversity in programming will guarantee that a full spectrum of voices and opinions are heard and seen on public television. Independent producers who are passionately concerned with their subjects, not their ratings, will insure that this diversity exists. While independents may be small in absolute numbers, the ideas and subject matters which their films touch on affect the vast majority of Americans.

I now believe the public's interest would be better served by the generation of high-quality, low-cost independent productions through the proposed National Independent Programming Service. NIPS would be funded by Congress through CPB and mandated to insure a thriving level of truly independent production. Furthermore the Programming Service will be able to clarify and focus the various voices in the independent community and will work at building an ongoing relationship with PBS. Together the independent community and PBS can figure out solutions to the current anarchy in distribution and scheduling.

Finally, NIPS would have a long-term approach to funding as well as allow for quick release of discretionary funds that would enable producers to react immediately when history is being made—be it the implementation of the Central American Peace Plan, the Chernobyl nuclear disaster and its vast implications, or the aftermath of Howard Beach. Currently CPB needs at least six months to decide on a project's worthiness and subsequent distribution of funds.

A farsighted and innovative approach to support of independent production would breathe new life into a moribund system. This is precisely what happened recently in Great Britain. Channel Four is a television station created exclusively to produce independent programs that were too risky for either the BBC or ITV. In just six short years, Channel Four was able to revitalize television broadcasting in particular and the film industry in general. It gave British national television production a world presence. If the efforts of Channel Four unleashed such a great creative force, it's exciting to imagine what similar efforts would have on American television.

As American independents we view PBS television as the single most important outlet for our work. Since we came of age along with public television, we will continue to fight for the promise of "the promotion of programs of high quality, diversity, creativity, excellence and innovation which are obtained from diverse sources" as mandated by Congress upon authorization of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. From my personal experience as well as other statistical testimony, it now appears that CPB has reneged on its promise to fulfill this mandate.

I hope that this subcommittee, recognizing the vitality and contribution of independent programming, and recognizing the failure of the present funding structures to adequately support independent production, will have the foresight to restructure the funding apparatus and make a major commitment to the development, production, and distribution of independently produced programming.

Lawrence Daressa,
Independent Producer and Co-Chair, The National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers

My name is Lawrence Daressa. I am co-chair of the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers, a coalition of virtually every media arts center in the country. For 20 years, I have also been President of California Newsreel, one of the nation's oldest independent documentary production companies.

I am here to ask Congress' support for a proposal which can begin to restore public broadcasting to its original purpose and promise. Congress has always linked its funding of public television to specific public service objectives. Chief among these has been to support program production which would be more diverse and innovative than that available on the commercial networks. In 1978 Congress further stipulated that at least 50 percent of this national program production funding should be awarded to independent producers. This was to insure that federally supported production would reflect an ethnic, regional, and artistic diversity beyond that of the public television stations, their demographically narrow memberships and their corporate underwriters.

Since 1978, independent producers have watched the precipitous erosion of CPB's support for this Congressionally mandated programming diversity. CPB has surrendered control of federal production funding to public television stations and their market-driven programming objectives. Today, 87.6 percent of all national general audience production funding is directly administered by stations or consortia of stations. Even the 8.7 percent which CPB awards directly to independent producers is selected by panels dominated by station representatives. Direct CPB support to stations and their consortia has increased from $88-million in 1984 to $142-million in 1987, while direct funding for independents has decreased from $4.8- to $2.4-million.

Today stations and their membership and corporate underwriter-driven programming objectives have been ceded effective control over virtually every dollar of public production funding. This is not a recipe for diversity but for conformity and exclusivity—if not white bread then white baguette. We have entered into the record articles from *TV Guide* and *Variety* excoriating the system for providing a homogenized stream of cautious, bland, if sometimes worthwhile, programming selected to appeal to the narrow tastes of their corporate underwriters and the less than .5 percent of overall television viewers who are paying subscribers. Many station managers have come to agree with the director of Maryland Public Television that subscribers should be given what they want, and hundreds of stations now feature reruns of such network standbys as *Leave It to Beaver* and *The Lawrence Welk Show*. So much for the promise of diversity in public television.

Independent producers have found themselves progressively marginalized in this brave new world of semi-commercial, public pay television. Our diverse voices reflecting the breadth of America's communities and opinions have no place in public television's plans to turn itself into an upscale version of the networks. We have found that insofar as we speak with an independent voice we have no place in public television, insofar as we address an audience beyond its paying members and corporate sponsors we will not be heard.

OBJECTIONS TO FUNDING OF INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS THROUGH STATIONS AND THEIR CONSORTIA

Today 75 percent of CPB's reported funding of independent production is in fact selected and administered by stations or their consortia. Independent producers have strenuously objected to the system's growing reliance on this funding mechanism. We regard this practice as a thinly veiled attempt to circumvent Congress' mandate that 50 percent of national production funding should be awarded to producers working independently of public television stations. We deplore this practice as inhibiting independence, diversity, and innovation. And we believe the uncritical inclusion of station-controlled funding of independent producers renders CPB's reported data highly misleading.

We would remind those who wish to characterize such funding as within the letter and spirit of the Act, that Congress' intent in singling out independent producers for support was not to provide an employment agency for independents. It was to insure a programming diversity which would not be possible if stations, their subscribers, and corporate underwriters determined every program funded. Therefore, the test of CPB compliance with the 1978 legislation is not so much who is selected, as how they are selected, specifically the extent to which they are selected to insure maximum programming diversity and innovation. It is difficult to see how diversity is achieved, if independent productions are selected precisely by those from whom these production are intended to be independent, namely, the stations.

Diversity is not served if from the thousands of independent projects which could be produced only those projects are chosen which have been submitted by a favored coterie of housebroken producers; diversity is not served if only those projects are chosen which most closely approximate the particular tastes of station managers, their paying subscribers, and their corporate underwriters. As Congressman Oxley has pointed out, this has proved a recipe for commercialism.

Let me cite just one anecdote so you can appreciate the pressures on independents. I recently called an independent producer—some of you would recognize his name—to ask his support for our proposals. He said that while he applauded our efforts, he could not publicly support the proposals because he had two projects pending before the Program Fund (by the way, an indication of the trust independents feel towards that body). I asked him if he really wanted to do either of these projects, and he admitted that both had been designed more with an eye towards the station managers on the CPB panels than from his own interest and convictions. I pointed out that if there were a national independent programming services he would again have the opportunity to do projects which he could believe in. And he replied, "You know, Larry, it's been so long since this system let me think as an independent, that I'm not sure I could do so if I had a chance."

This, I think, indicates the real tragedy and betrayal of the last 10 years. Not only has the system failed to make room for new talent, not only has the system declined to nurture minority producers, it has also silenced the independence and stifled the imagination of a whole generation of established, award-winning film- and videomakers. Thousands have left the field; more have been excluded from any funding; some have even had to go to work for the stations. Indeed, the independent community has become so discouraged at the situation at CPB that the number of submissions from independents has declined to roughly half what it was three years ago, while station submissions have skyrocketed.

During the 1981 and 1984 reauthorization rounds, independent producers came back to Congress with our concerns about this growing misuse of federal funds. In 1984, at Congress' urging, a consultative procedure was established between CPB and the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers to develop new programs through which independent producers could better contribute diversity and innovation to the system. Millions of air miles and hundreds of thousands of dollars later,

Marc Heustis and Wendy Dallas, *Chuck Solomon: Coming of Age*

Since 1981, when AIDS first starting taking its toll, PBS has nationally broadcast a mere five hours of programming on the subject. Meanwhile producers like Marc Heustis and Wendy Dallas have struggled to get on their documentaries about AIDS onto the system. While *Chuck Solomon: Coming of Age* was aired three times by KQED in San Francisco because of the community's as well as the press' positive response and was presented this spring by WNYC, a municipal public television station, their luck with PBS stopped there. At PBS and at other affiliate stations the story was the same: Gail Christian, director of News and Special Projects at PBS, or her equivolent at the local stations, would screen the work, like it, then have to show it to a committee for final approval. These committees, says Heustis, are "the kiss of death," invariably leading to a rejection. The reasons for rejection, when offered, were that it was "too local," "too marginal," the "production values" were not up to broadcast standards, and that it contained a derogatory remark about Maureen Reagan.

Photo: Marshall Rheiner



despite numerous suggestions from our coalition, CPB has initiated not one new production opportunity for the independent producing community. CPB staff has met with hundreds of minority and emerging independent producers over these years so new voices could be included in the system. By its own admission, only two projects have been funded as a result of these consultations. Clearly CPB has been incapable or unwilling to stake out a secure, well-defined place for independent production within the system.

THE NEED FOR AN AUTONOMOUS PROGRAM SERVICE

Independent producers have been left no choice but to return to Congress to ask it to instruct CPB to implement specific mechanisms to achieve the mandated goal of programming diversity and innovation. We are proposing that CPB create a national independent program service and minority program services with an exclusive and unambiguous mandate: to serve audiences presently neglected by public television and to develop new audiences for innovative programming.

The past 10 years have provided irrefutable proof that without a discrete, insulated fund (only a proportion of total federal public television support) the stations' headlong rush to commercialism will sweep aside any residual commitment to programming diversity and innovation.

If we are really dedicated to diversity, if we believe in the necessary contribution of truly independent voices to democracy, then we cannot shy away from our responsibility to create an entity unambiguously committed to this goal. CPB did not hesitate to collaborate with the stations to set up consortia (*Frontline, MacNeil/Lehrer, American Playhouse*) dedicated to the stations' goals of prime time news, investigative journalism, and drama programming. It was altogether legitimate and sensible for CPB to give the stations responsibility for meeting their core programming objectives. Similarly, we are asking Congress to instruct CPB to collaborate with independent producers and others concerned with broadcast innovation to set up a "consortia," an independent programming service, dedicated to a different goal: programming diversity, precisely beyond that of the stations' mainstream program offering. It is essential that some (though by no means all) federal funding be explicitly reserved to pursue programming goals outside the immediate programming priorities of stations, their paying subscribers, and their corporate underwriters. It is not a question of setting up yet another bureaucratic structure to audit or police how the stations spend federal money; it is a question of setting up a production entity precisely designed and exclusively dedicated to supplementing, broadening and to some extent challenging PBS' core programming.

While some will always argue that there is not enough money to take a risk on experimentation, to serve minority audiences, we believe a system which will not invest in its future will have no future. Surely out of an appropriation of more than 200-million taxpayer dollars, out of system revenues considerably greater than a billion tax-exempt dollars, out of 100-billion dollar television industry, we can afford to produce just a few hours a week of programming which push forward the frontiers of American broadcasting. Surely, American television, and not just public television, demands a "risk pool," a broadcast laboratory, a research and development department which can think beyond today's financial needs? Surely, there must be room somewhere on the broadcast spectrum for one or two programs over which the Nielsens do not cast their deadening pall? Isn't this what public television was supposed to do all along?

A national independent program service will not take one dollar away from the system. In fact, it will provide a more efficient mechanism for directing scarce dollars where they are most urgently needed: the production of new, innovative programming. We have proposed a national independent program service, as opposed to simply a set-aside for independent producers, precisely because it offers an integrated, broadcast solution to the challenge of programming diversity. This service would not just fund, but also package, distribute, and promote programming designed specifically to develop new public television audiences. It would bring coherence and vision to the anarchy of independent production. It would work with individual station managers and with PBS to discover more effective ways to schedule and promote innovative work. It would give character to the



Stuart Marshall, *Bright Eyes*

The Discovery Channel, however, thought *Chuck Solomon* was good enough to air. So too did television stations in the U.K. and Spain. The U.K.'s Channel Four was not only willing to program *Chuck Solomon*, which uses a relatively conventional approach to documentary filmmaking. It also provided production funds for a work like Stuart Marshall's *Bright Eyes*. This British tape is an orthodox blending of documentary and dramatic segments, which intertwines such themes as AIDS, the representation of disease in nineteenth century photography, and theories of criminality, censorship, Nazi persecution of gay men and lesbians, as well as contemporary representations of people with AIDS.

Courtesy October

amorphous programming wasteland outside public television's current prime time schedule, encouraging more efficient use of public television licensees' airtime. This mini broadcasting service would offer alternative, healthy competition to the system's core offerings.

While no programming can ever be assured universal carriage on a system where each of 300 licensees jealously controls its own schedule, we can confidently assert that a national independent programming service will make it easier for stations to schedule and promote diverse, independent work than at present. A consistent stream of high-quality, exciting programming, skillfully packaged and backed up by a national promotional campaign, will offer stations an irresistible incentive to carry independent work. It is inconceivable that a system reduced to reruns of *Lawrence Welk*, jazz aerobics, and endless repeats of imported British melodramas, would find no place for programming by America's outstanding, award-winning film and video producers.

Over the last 10 years, the enthusiasm and promise generated by the 1978 legislation has turned to disappointment and disillusionment for most independent producers. Thousands have left the field; more have been condemned to premature silence; some have even had to go to work for the stations. For 10 years public television has willfully evaded the unprecedented mandate posed by Congress' far-sighted 1967 and 1978 legislation: to make public television a place which nurtures rather than censors diversity, to make public television not just another network but a forum for a democratic people. Now independent producers have taken up that challenge. We have come forward with a proposal to set up a programming service, insulated from the stations' commercial pressures and dedicated exclusively to bringing all the voices of America, frequently challenging, sometimes raucous, always dynamic, back to the airwaves.

Our proposals for independent program services are modest and achievable; they have the overwhelming support of the independent producing community and media critics; they require not restructuring of public television or increased funding. Last Sunday, Ron Powers, television critic for CBS, in endorsing independent producers' proposals, reminded us that this nation was founded by men willing to take a risk on the free and vigorous exchange of views. He encouraged us here today to have the courage to commit just a small part of public television's federal support to preserving that diversity into the television age. The National Coalition's proposals offer practical structures for insuring that the promise of diversity and innovation can at last become a reality in public television in the 1990s.

CONCLUSION

We are talking here today about reauthorizing public television with a three year appropriation of close to a billion dollars. This represents a 300-million dollar increase over present funding levels. We are discussing a system which will receive billions more in tax-exempt contributions over these years. Surely in all this we can find enough money to produce just a few hours of programming a week dedicated to broadcast diversity and innovation. Surely there is enough to create a broadcast home for the First Amendment, enough to set up a risk-taking fund, a laboratory where we can explore what television really might be able to do. Surely there is enough to provide programming for new audiences without regard to the deadening pall of the Nielsen ratings. Last Sunday morning, Ron Powers, CBS's media analyst, endorsing independent producer proposals on network TV, commented that this nation was founded by men and women who were willing to take a risk on the diversity of ideas. In his words, the mission of public broadcasting was too important to simply "leave it to beaver." Independent producers are asking this committee to help restore public television to the far-sighted mission envisioned for it in the 1967 and 1978 legislation. We are asking you to reserve just a small amount of federal funding for a program service for the 1990s, which will make public television not just another network but a forum for a democratic people.

The Senate

Communications Subcommittee

Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation March 15, 1988

Frederick Wiseman
Independent Producer

I AM AN INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER WITH NO FORMAL AFFILIATION WITH ANY PUBLIC television station. All of my films have been broadcast in prime time on public television. My entire professional career has been in public television. I care about it. I am committed to it. I regret having to make this public statement sharply criticizing the public television system. I am doing so only after many years of private but unsuccessful efforts to call the attention of various administrations of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) and the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) to what I and many others consider to be the major shortcomings of the system. Whatever comments I make and however bluntly stated, they are only a reflection of my deep concern for and commitment to the long-term purposes and goals of public television.

I would like to urge this committee to make a thorough study of the way public television actually works and compare the reality with the goals for public television as formulated in the 1979 Report of the Carnegie Commission.

> We believe public radio and television can lead the way. Intelligently organized and adequately funded public broadcasting can help the creative spirit flourish. It can reveal how we are different and what we share in common. It can illuminate the dark corners of the world and dark corners of the mind. It can offer forums to a multitude of voices. It can reveal wisdom and understanding—and foolishness too. It can delight us. It can entertain us. It can inform us. Above all, it can add to our understanding of our own inner workings and of one another.

I suggest to you that realistic assessment of public television would reveal the following:

- That the current Board of CPB has few people on it with any experience in broadcasting. The Board is therefore not capable of providing any real direction or supervision to the administration or the staff.
- That the administration of CPB is made up of people with no achievement and little experience in broadcasting.
- That there is no representation in the Board, Administration or Program staff of CPB or PBS of the area of expertise which is known as filmmaking.
- That the program staffs of CPB and PBS derive their authority solely from the chairs they sit in and not from achievement in the program area in which they exercise power. Indeed, some of them were given their positions with no prior experience but were handed the job as an opportunity for on-the-job training. Others on the staffs may have had some experience but little discernible achievement in public affairs, cultural, and children's programming, the areas in which they now have authority and responsibility.
- That the present structure of public broadcasting makes it very difficult to attract competent, experienced, well-trained people to take staff jobs at CPB or PBS.
- That there is a great deal of duplication between CPB and PBS and that large amounts of money are wasted because of overlapping bureaucracies.
- That there is little effective coordination of programming decisions between the staffs of CPB and PBS.
- That the real purpose of public television seems not to be programming but the maintenance and preservation of the public television bureaucracy.
- That the panel process through which the Program Fund of CPB allocates money can only produce mediocre programs.

I would like now to discuss the panel procedure of the Program Fund in some detail as an example of the way major decisions about national programming are actually made in public television, and how this process necessarily results in mediocre programming.

The panel process brings together for two days in Washington, for a one-time meeting a group of people

- who have never worked together before.
- whose knowledge of filmmaking and broadcasting varies from none to considerable.
- who have little or no awareness of other programming decisions and policies of the Program Fund and elsewhere in public television.
- who have no prior or continuing responsibility for the decisions they make.
- who have no opportunity to ask questions of applicants to clarify the panel's understanding of the proposals.
- who are often unfamiliar with an applicant's previous work.
- who do not have the time to look at more than a few minutes of sample work submitted with a proposal.
- who do not spend more than a few minutes evaluating each proposal.

For example, typically a panel meets for 12 working hours over two days and considers 60 proposals. Assuming the panel works every minute, it means that the panel spends 12 minutes on each proposal, including screening time. If we assume that five minutes is spent watching a sample of the filmmaker's work, that leaves at most seven minutes for discussion and voting by the panel members.

The panel process is defended by its advocates as being "democratic." A truly democratic procedure would incorporate principles of professionalism, responsibility, accountability, informed decision-making, and the applicant's right to be heard. The net result of the panel process is that no one is responsible, no one is accountable, weak programming decisions are made, and there is no appeal. The panel members disperse after their two day, one-time meeting. The staff members, when asked, say their hands are tied by the panel whose decision they are bound to respect "when practicable." The result is that no one minds the store and the public loses out most of all, because the quality of the programming offered to the public is inferior.

I would like to suggest a hypothesis to you. It is only a hypothesis because the information that would prove, disprove, or modify it is not available to me. The hypothesis is as follows: That a substantial portion of the money that is allocated through the panel process is wasted on programs that are not completed, or completed but not broadcast, or broadcast but not watched.

I would like to suggest that your committee thoroughly investigate the



Vanalyne Green, *Trick or Drink*

Vanalyne Green's *Trick or Drink* examines life as a child of alcoholic parents—a subject rarely dealt with on PBS, and then only in the context of news and public affairs programming. Green's autobiographical reconstruction of a young girl's life with alcoholic parents takes an alternative approach, using crayon drawings, textbook illustrations, family photographs, and first-person recollections to evoke her painful and humorous experiences. *Trick or Drink* was scheduled on WNET's *Independent Focus*, but has not been programmed by any other public television station. Video art and nontraditional narratives such as *Trick or Drink* not only have a difficult time finding a venue on U.S. public television stations, but also have little or no entré to CPB's funding resources, which do not recognize these and other alternative forms of art and cultural programming.

Courtesy videomaker

Program Fund. The Fund has now been in operation for eight years. The data on its operation is or should be available to you. If the type of analysis that I am about to suggest has been made, it has not been made available, as far as I know, to the Congress, the stations, or anyone with a professional interest in the operation of public television. It is not accessible to the general public. The following questions should be asked and the answers carefully evaluated:

1. How has the Program Fund money been spent each year?
2. How much of this money has been allocated by the panel process?
3. Who are on the panels, and how are they selected?
4. What are the criteria that determine whether money is awarded by panel, staff, or Board decision? For example, what are the criteria for the exemption of *Frontline*, *American Playhouse*, and *The MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour* from the panel process?
5. For each of the panels that have been convened over the last eight years:
   (a) What was the total sum available to that panel?
   (b) How many applications were received?
   (c) What procedure was used to select the projects that were to be considered by the panel?
   (d) What costs were associated with that selection procedure?
   (e) What were the costs of convening each panel?
   (f) How many applications were considered by each panel?
   (g) For what length of time did the panels meet? Days? Hours?
   (h) What was the average length of time spent on each proposal?
   (i) In what order did each of the panels rank the proposals?
   (j) If money was not awarded according to the rank ordering by the panel:
      (1) Did the next ranked project get selected?
      (2) If not, what criteria were applied?
      (3) Was this the result of a decision by the Director of the Program Fund? The staff? Their joint decision?
   (k) Did a Board member or any officer of the Corporation outside the Program Fund staff ever intervene in a funding decision?
   (l) Has the Program Fund publicly identified all the proposals actually funded with the name of the recipient, a brief description of the proposal, and the amount actually awarded?
   (m) What is the average length of time between the time that a proposal is submitted and the signing of the contract for a proposal that was selected?

The answers to these or similar questions should be make available to you and to all individuals and organizations interested in public broadcasting. Once this information is available there are another set of questions that I think you should address in the interest of clarifying the goals and procedures of the Program Fund.

1. Of the programs and scripts commissioned by the Program Fund, are there any that have not been completed? If so, what are the reasons for the failure of each to finish?
2. Are there programs that have been completed but not broadcast? Which ones? Why were they not broadcast?
3. Of the programs broadcast, which programs and how many have been included in the PBS core schedule? What programs and how many have been broadcast outside the core schedule?
4. How many stations carried each of the programs?
5. What ratings did each of the programs receive?
6. What was the critical reception of each program, i.e., were the films reviewed in the national or local press? What was the response among people who write about public television in different parts of the country?

I would like to suggest to you that the criteria of critical response, size of the audience, and the number of stations carrying a program are one measure of the success of a given program. A comparison could be made between programs funded by the panel process and films rejected by the panels, but nevertheless made and broadcast. If this comparison was made, it would constitute a valuable measure of the panel's effectiveness in picking programs.

The panel process is an example of diffusing decision-making to the point where no one is responsible. It is a process guaranteed to produce mediocre programming. In place of a staff of experienced, professional, responsible commissioning editors, the members of the panels make program decisions. The panel members leave after two heady days in Washing-

Peter Kinoy, Pam Yates, and Tom Sigel, *When the Mountains Tremble*

Skylight Pictures' feature-length documentary on Guatemala was dubbed "When the Stations Tremble" when fear and loathing from some sectors in public television threatened its scheduled broadcast three years ago. *When the Mountains Tremble*, the chronicle of civil war in the Central American country, fell victim to public television's aversion to documentaries that do not conform to traditional notions of journalism and that address a controversial subject using a method other than a stopwatch balance of two opposing views. PBS spent almost $55,000 taping two wraparounds in hope of making the film more palatable to station programmers. After many stops and starts, viewers finally got to see it on



ton. They have no continuing responsibility. If they made bad decisions, their jobs are not at stake.

The Program Fund staff also has no responsibility. They can turn their palms up and say, as they do, that the legislation requires panels and, while they may not agree with a panel's decision, there's nothing to be done. They have to abide by the panel's decision. It takes considerable courage not to accept the panel's recommendations, and while this is occasionally done, it is rare. The result is that no one is accountable. It is this institutionalized lack of accountability that in large part is responsible for the mediocre programming decisions of CPB. The procedure is designed to exclude the basic elements of professional competence and responsibility.

The use of panels is an example of passive decision making. Instead of actively searching out the best filmmakers and the most original and interesting projects, the panel process passively responds to the mailman. The result is that quality, which should be the only criterion, is the least relevant consideration in programming. Personal politics, the buddy system, jealousy, and pop ideology dominate the panels' deliberations.

Filmmakers dealing with public television have a right to be judged by and be responsible to people who understand their work and have the professional competence to assess it in the context of other programs and programming needs. The quality of the work should be the sole standard. Ideology, ethnic background, social goodwill, and trendy labels should be irrelevant. This is not the case in public television.

My conclusions about the Program Fund's lack of accountability and the resulting failure to produce quality programming are widely shared in the public television community. They reflect not just dissatisfaction with the small amount of money from the total CPB budget available for programming but dismay at the manner in which these funds are allocated, the procedures that are followed, and the qualifications of the staff. These feelings are not often publicly expressed for fear of retaliation and because of the need to do business with the Program Fund, no matter how bad it is. Make no mistake. These are not just my parochial views reflecting my narrow self-interest. They are widely shared by station presidents, managers, and programmers, as well as by independent filmmakers. There are differing views about what might or should be done. But there is a wide consensus on the failure of the present system.

An alternative model is Channel Four in England. When Channel Four was established, the president and chief executive was a man who had a distinguished career as a filmmaker, film producer, and television executive. He appointed a group of commissioning editors in public affairs, the arts, drama, and documentary. These were men and women with wide experience in their fields, the respect of their peers, and a comprehension of the intellectual, cultural, political, and artistic life of their country. These editors have the authority to make program decisions quickly. The programs are not necessarily always successful, but the commissioning editors' decisions are at least based on professional knowledge, personal experience, and intellectual depth. If the decisions are bad, their jobs are at stake. They, in turn, are responsible to a president who is a broadcasting professional and to a board that is made up of people who have the professional experience and competence to consider and evaluate the content and technical issues involved in programming.

The reason that the English model is admirable is its reliance on an administrative structure staffed by experts who are accountable for their decisions. The English understand that excellence is not achieved by dispensing money for film production through an alleged democratic process. Moreover, you cannot achieve excellence through a staff that lacks the qualifications to succeed in private competitive markets. Public television is like a third rate university where everyone has tenure.

People of intellectual and professional competence certainly are working here and there in public television. Unfortunately, most competent professionals would not consider working in public television in its present form.

I urge you to continue your support of public television, but to couple your support with clear directives for institutional reform that would shrink the bureaucracy, eliminate overlapping organizations, and attract competent people who have the capacity to identify and produce quality programming, rather than maintain a vast, inefficient, and bumbling bureaucracy.

As an indication that my critique is widely shared I will close my testimony with a quotation from a speech by Larry Grossman, the former president of PBS and now the president of NBC News.

> What's wrong is that the system, the structure of public broadcasting as it has been designed in this country is so diffuse, duplicative, bureaucratic, confusing, frustrating and senseless that it is a miracle [it has] survived at all.
>
> It is a system no one in the outside world understands or can penetrate. It is a system that keeps public broadcasting at war with itself. It is a system that insures that public television will remain mired in second class status, with a top heavy, expensive and stifling bureaucracy; a handicap in attracting or retaining truly creative and talented people, and an incapacity to make timely program decisions.

I am here today to testify because public television is a mess. The fact that it is a mess is not a secret. Everybody knows. What is strange is that nothing is done about it. People working in public television seem to be incapable

of taking corrective action. They are stuck protecting their own baronies, and battles over turf occupy time and energy that should go into programming. The only leverage point in the system is Congress through the exercise of power connected with appropriations. I am also here today to ask you to act on what you and everybody familiar with public television already know. By reorganizing public television you have an opportunity to have an impact on the educational, artistic, cultural, and intellectual life of the country. Only the Congress has the power to effect the required changes. I urge you to undertake a comprehensive reorganization of public television.

Marlon T. Riggs, Independent Producer

MR. CHAIRMAN, MY NAME IS MARLON RIGGS. I AM AN INDEPENDENT DOCUMENTARY producer. My most recent work, *Ethnic Notions*, was just shown on national public television as one of the PBS specials for February, Black History Month. Besides the PBS broadcast, *Ethnic Notions* has been screened in film festivals worldwide, receiving top awards and honors—from Best Documentary in the San Francisco International Film Festival to Best of Festival in the Black American Cinema Society Awards to a special invitational screening at this year's International Public Television Festival. As you know, I am here to describe what it's like to be a smaller independent producer in America.

In a word: dismal.

Keep in mind that for many producers like myself, I represent success, triumph. My program has aired nationally in prime time. The reviews have been near unanimous in their praise. Letters and callers commend my work. Why, then, am I so bleak?

In part, because it took nearly five years to make this film—and four of those were spent hustling, pleading, begging—writing one proposal after another, being shuffled from one agency to another, getting one rejection after another, trying to raise the money to make this documentary happen.

And in the process being repeatedly slapped in the face with this brutal reality: emerging independent producers, producers of color, producers with voices and visions that risk upsetting the status quo, that challenge not only what public television says but how it says it, that these producers have been pushed to the very bottom of the list, when it comes to funding and programming priorities for public television.

Three times I applied to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting; three times I was rejected. Three times to the National Endowment for the Humanities, three times rejected. To the Ford, the Rockefeller, the Skaggs Foundations—rejected. Striking out so many times, I was tempted often to just give up.

But what I found most defeating was not simply having my proposal turned down. What nearly defeated me—and defeats so many others—were the reasons for rejection. Too "controversial," said one potential funder. Too "sensitive," said another. "Not appropriate for a television audience," explained another.

This, of course, regarding *Ethnic Notions*, a documentary which for the first time on television systematically traced the history of racial caricature and stereotype in America, linking each stereotype to the nation's changing social, political, and economic needs to justify racial oppression.

"Why resurrect the ugly past?" asked one CPB panelist. Best leave these old hurtful images dead and buried.

The best approach to this subject, advised another CPB panelist, would be "with levity and humor."

Don't bother sending your proposal here, a staff person at NEH bluntly informed me: This project has no merit. It merely seeks to point the finger. You won't get our support.

Dumfounded, I realized belatedly that the principle of diversity preached by public broadcasting was little adhered to in practice. As I scanned the programs that did get funding, it became disturbingly clear where the new priorities lay: the same, the tame, the safe. Animal shows, opera, ballet, and symphony shows—money shows, Constitution shows, the usual staple of British imports, and competent but generally noncontroversial, unprovocative series produced by station consortia. In this scheme of things, diversity and innovation—the principal virtues of the smaller independent—occupied a very tiny place.

The shining exception, of course, is Henry Hampton's gripping *Eyes on the Prize*. Yet even in this exception, where the subject was so compelling, a subject for which there was a national consensus of goodwill and respect, the producer still found the fundraising an arduous burden. If it's like this for him, imagine the struggle for the rest of us.

Imagine being told, as I was, once you've finally raised all the money and actually finished the documentary, that sorry, the fundraising isn't over. In order to get your program on PBS, you've got to pay PBS—that is, raise the money to cover packaging and promotion expenses. And on top of that, you, the producer, have to find funding for your acquisition fee.

To describe this situation as an insult is an understatement.

Yet, it's a situation that not tens, not hundreds, but thousands of independents in America have faced over the years and face still today. Luckily, *Ethnic Notions* was picked up as part of PBS's Black History Month package, which already had a promotional budget, relieving me of the need to raise my own. Uncharacteristically, the documentary was promised an acquisition fee—which I, the producer, would not have to raise. These exceptions, however, only highlight the rule: for independent producers in this nation, for those of us who attempt to bring our unique cultural perspectives to bear on public television, our work is a series of one morale-crushing obstacle after another.

In my eight years as a smaller independent, in my painful knowledge of what other award-winning independents so often face, I've come to the unqualified conviction:

Independents need a place, well-defined and well-financed, that nurtures new talent, encourages experimentation, fosters true artistic, cultural, and ethnic diversity, is unafraid of controversy—a place, a lab, if you will, that continually redefines what television is and should be, a television lab that awakens and challenges audiences, boldly taking them where television has never taken them before.

Not only do independents need such a place. Public broadcasting needs it—if it's ever to fulfill its promise of being a true alternative, not an upscale imitator, in television programming.

Lawrence M. Sapadin,
Executive Director, The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers and Co-Chair, The National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE, THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY to present the views of the independent producer community on proposed Senate Bill No. 2114, and on the role of independent producers within public broadcasting.

I am presenting this testimony as co-chair of the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers, which since 1984 has been representing the concerns of independents in public broadcasting, and as executive director of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), a national membership organization of over 4,500 independent producers and individuals working in motion picture and television production.

We are pleased that the Subcommittee is proposing an increase in funding for public broadcasting, at least to the extent that such increased support may make it possible for the system to offer the American public more and better programming and to fulfill its mission of providing a noncommercial alternative to network television. We are not optimistic, however, about the ability of the system, as currently structured, to fulfill its mission to provide diverse and innovative programming responsive to the needs of the American public.

Public broadcasting has been the subject of considerable criticism recently. A two-part article in last August's *TV Guide* concluded that the public broadcasting system "lacks strong, cohesive, visionary leadership at the national level." In the *Columbia Journalism Review*, John Wicklein, former director of news and public affairs programming at CPB, observed that "as presently financed and administered, public broadcasting is vulnerable not only to political pressure but also to pressure from large corporations." John J. O'Connor, writing in the August 23, 1987 *New York Times*, described public television as "severely, perhaps fatally, crippled by misguided financing policies and...ideological infighting, which has often resulted in funds being funnelled into plant and equipment rather than programming production." Most recently, a commentary on the March 6, 1988 *CBS Sunday Morning* show suggested that public broadcasting has become "too respectable, too safe, too timid, too conscious of its upper-middle-class pledge donors and of the big corporations that now dominate much of public television's funding."

Senate Bill 2114 fails to address—other than by proposing to increase funding—these central programming issues.

Today, the independent producer community is proposing a solution which would broaden the scope of public television programming and make it more responsive to the American public. The National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers is calling for the establishment of a National Independent Program Service with the unambiguous mandate to oversee the selection, funding, promotion, and distribution of independently produced public television programs. In addition the National Coalition is seeking the legislative protection of funding for the minority programming consortia that help package and distribute minority produced programs to the Public Broadcasting System. We urge the Subcommittee to amend Senate Bill 2114 to include these proposals.

I. PUBLIC BROADCASTING'S MISSION IS TO PROVIDE A NONCOMMERCIAL ALTERNATIVE TO NETWORK TELEVISION.

Public broadcasting was established to provide a noncommercial alternative to mainstream television, and thereby to free the art of television from the shackles of ratings, demographics, and the demands of advertisers. The first Carnegie Commission Report articulated the goal of a public television that included "all that is of human interest and importance which is not at the moment appropriate or available for support by advertising...." (*Public Television: A Program for Action*, Bantam Books, January 1967, p. 2).

The Second Carnegie Commission stated: "The programs we conceive to be the essence of Public Television are in general not economic for commercial sponsorship...and are directed at audiences ranging from the tens of thousands to the occasional tens of millions" (*A Public Trust*, Bantam Books, April 1979, p. 3).

The founders and leaders of public broadcasting recognized that commercial broadcasting would never, by itself, provide a true marketplace of ideas. True diversity required the creation of a public space in telecommunications where the principle criteria would be diversity and excellence, and emphatically not commercial viability.

Public broadcasting was created to be different.

Recent widespread criticisms of the growing similarity of public broadcasting with commercial television underscore the need for a noncommercial source of funding. This was, is, and will always be true if public broadcasting is to be what the first Carnegie Commission envisioned: "...an instrument for the free communication of ideas in a free society" (*Ibid.* p. 8).

II. INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS HAVE A HISTORY OF SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING.

Since the inception of public broadcasting 20 years ago, independent producers have been strong supporters of a truly public, diverse, noncommercial telecommunications system.

For independents, public broadcasting represents the only major broadcast outlet for their work in this country. For the American public, public broadcasting is the only mass medium by which they can receive and appreciate independently produced programs.

Independent producers and the founders of public broadcasting have shared the goal of a broadcast medium that can and will deliver to the American public high-quality cultural and informational programming free from the sponsorship and ratings constraints of commercial broadcasting.

III. INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY, DIVERSE PROGRAMMING.

Independent producers create films and television programs from a personal vision shaped by their experiences and concerns. They work in all formats and genres: dramatic feature films, documentaries, animation, experimental film and video. Typically, they work outside the traditional production centers of Hollywood movie-making and network television. Independents tend to work regionally, providing a voice for citizens throughout the nation. Many women and minority producers, in particular, facing continued obstacles to working within the commercial industry, work independently. Overall, independent producers are passionate about their stories, and work close to their material. Their work reflects the diversity of political, cultural, and social life in this country and enriches public discussion.

Independents are the authors of their work. Independent work is not sponsored or commissioned by an agency having control over the result. The essence of independent production is editorial, budgetary, and copyright control.

IV. INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION PROMOTES FEDERAL POLICIES FAVORING DIVERSITY IN PUBLIC BROADCASTING.

In the 1978 Public Telecommunications Financing Act, Congress sought to increase the quantity of program production. It called upon CPB to promote the production of programs "of high quality, diversity, creativity, excellence and innovation, which are *obtained from diverse sources*" (§396(g)(1)(A)) (emphasis added). House and Senate conferees explicitly recognized "the important contribution independent producers can make in innovative and creative new programming" (Conference Report No. 95-177, at 5396).

House Telecommunications Subcommittee members heard testimony about the substantial overhead charges added to the cost of station-produced programs. By contrast, they were impressed by the ability of independent producers to provide high-quality programming "at a substantially lower cost than in-house productions" (House Report No. 95-1178, at 5357).

In its effort to promote diversity and innovation in public broadcasting, Congress looked to independents to play a major role in program production for the expanding system and provided procedures, such as peer panel review, to promote independents' access to the system.

V. THE 1978 ACT SOUGHT TO SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE PARTICIPATION BY SMALLER INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS.

Following hearings, the original House Subcommittee bill was amended to require that a "substantial amount [of CPB's program dollars] shall be reserved for distribution to independent producers...for the production of programs" (§396(k)(3)(B)(i)). House and Senate conferees stated that:

> In agreeing to the term "substantial amount" for independent producers, it is the conferees' intention to recognize the important contribution independent producers can make in innovative and creative new programming. By "independent producer" the conferees have in mind producers not affiliated with any public telecommunications entity and *especially the smaller independent organizations and individuals who, while talented, may not yet have received national recognition.* The talents of these producers have not been adequately utilized in the past (House Conference Report No. 95-177 at 5396)(emphasis added).

In presenting the final bill on the House floor, one of the bill's sponsors, Congressman Henry Waxman (D-California) clarified for the record what was intended by the language "substantial amount":

> Mr. Speaker, I supported the amendment in subcommittee, and I wanted to clarify one aspect of it on which the legislative history is silent.
>
> In adopting this amendment, the subcommittee was being sensitive to the criticisms that the system has not been fully responsive to the independents' need for access.
>
> In subcommittee discussion of this amendment, is was asked what was meant by the requirement that "a substantial amount" of CPB's programming funds be reserved for independents.
>
> It was agreed that the subcommittee intended that this requirement be interpreted by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting as meaning at least 50 percent of such funds be so reserved (*Congressional Record*, July 10, 1978, H. 6316).

This understanding was subsequently communicated directly to CPB President Robben Flemming in two letters dated July 17, 1979 and December 13, 1979 in which Rep. Waxman reiterated the subcommittee's intention:

> We made clear not only that 25% of available funds be spent on programming but also that half of those funds be available to independent producers (7/17/79).
>
> It would not be correct to conclude that any lesser figure would be consistent with the legislative history of section 396(k). I engaged in my colloquy with the Chairman precisely to make the record clear on this point (12/13/79).

VI. CONGRESS HAS EXPRESSED A CLEAR PREFERENCE FOR THE USE OF OUTSIDE PANELS IN PROGRAM SELECTION.

The final 1978 legislation also included a provision requiring the use of panels in the selection of program proposals. Proposals for both series and individual programs are to be made "on the basis of comparative merit by panels of outside experts representing diverse interests and perspectives "wherever practicable" (§396(g)(2)(B)(i)). The panel requirement was designed to promote CPB support of television programs that reflect the many communities of interest in the U.S., and which stand as an expression of diversity and excellence (§396(a)(5)).

VII. CPB HAS FAILED TO ACHIEVE PROGRAM DIVERSITY THROUGH THE SUBSTANTIAL PARTICIPATION OF SMALLER INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS.

A. CPB's Early Programming Efforts Pointed the Way Toward Greater Diversity.

In response to the Congressional policies and mandates set forth in the 1978 Act, CPB established the Program Fund to distribute production funds to stations and independents for national programming. The CPB board adopted "Program Fund Policies and Procedures" that reflect the Corporation's understanding of Congress' intent. According to this document, the process for distributing funds would involve:

1) the use of "a detailed request for proposals to provide producers with all the information they need to compete for funds." ("Policies and Procedures," p. 4),

2) dissemination of this "RFP" as widely as possible, including to CPB, PBS, and NAEB [now defunct] newsletters, to the general and trade press, to independent producers, and to organizations, trade groups, special interest and women's groups; in addition, a special newsletter would be created to notify all independent producers about guidelines and priorities for funding (*Ibid.*, p. 6),

3) use of panels of outside experts to advise in the selection of proposals for programs.

Concerning independent producers, CPB established the following definition: "An independent producer is any producer who is in complete control of the content and the budget of the production" (*Ibid.*, p. 13). The CPB "Policies" further provided:

> In making grants, the Program Fund will observe the spirit and the letter of the Congressional mandate to ensure that a substantial portion of the money goes *directly* to independent producers who submit proposals of quality that fall within the guidelines and priorities set up by the Board of Directors (*Ibid.*)(emphasis added).

In 1980, the Program Fund initiated two series specifically designed to encourage participation of smaller independents: an independent anthology of 30-minute pieces, and a series of one-hour documentaries entitled *Crisis to Crisis*. Both series used the mechanisms detailed in the "Policies and Procedures": request for proposals, wide circulation of information, panel selection, and direct funding to the producers.

Funding of the *Independent Anthology* resulted in 23 wonderfully diverse pieces, including animation by Faith Hubley, a film co-directed by the acclaimed photographer Robert Frank, a project by the internationally renowned opera writer/director Robert Wilson, as well as work coming, geographically, from Hawaii to Vermont, and in genres ranging from the personal essay to the hard-hitting documentary. The series was a cornucopia of independent work, made available to the American public over its public broadcasting system.

Crisis to Crisis, a series of one-hour documentaries, was more consistent in its purpose, but enjoyed a broad range of opinion and style. It, too, drew on the talents of independent producers from across the nation, who

Su Friedrich, *The Ties That Bind*

Over the years, Su Friedrich has developed a reputation as an innovator in experimental narratives. But her films, such as the feature-length drama *The Ties That Bind*, which explores an ordinary woman's experience during the extraordinary times of Nazi Germany, have never made it onto PBS. Although WNET-New York expressed interest in *The Ties That Bind*, they ended up rejecting the work. The reason? The local municipal public station, WNYC, had already shown it, and while WNYC's signal reaches far fewer viewers then the more powerful WNET, the latter was interested in New York premieres only. This scenario, which Friedrich encountered twice, points up one of the difficulties faced by filmmakers who end up marketing their work station-by-station, after being turned down by the PBS national system.

Courtesy filmmaker



obtained access to public broadcasting through the policies and procedures developed by CPB in response to the Congress' concerns.

B. CPB Has Abandoned the Diversity of Independent Production in Favor of Safer, More Uniform, Station-Based Production.

Pressed by funding cuts and rescissions in the early 1980s, and the stations' insatiable appetite for a greater share of CPB's program funds, CPB began to bend its funding policies away from direct funding of independents toward increased funding for stations and station consortia. As more funds passed to station consortia, rather than directly to independent producers, the use of selection panels also declined. This period also saw the increased influence of corporate sponsors, actual and potential, who could underwrite programming without taxing the stations' existing government support (see "Sponsors Call the Shots on Public TV," *Variety*, November 13, 1985). At the same time, the system made a priority of increasing member/subscriber support, creating irresistible pressure to program for the 10 percent of the audience that did, or could, pledge support, at the expense of the much broader and diverse American public that chose not to.

Predictably, these marketplace pressures had a devastating impact on independent production on public television. In early 1982, CPB announced the establishment and funding (with $5-million: at the time its largest grant ever) of a documentary unit based at WGBH/Boston (for a series later entitled *Frontline*); later that year, a consortium for children's programming based at WQED/Pittsburgh was established. *Crisis to Crisis*, the series designed for smaller independents, was discontinued. The following year, the *Independent Anthology* (aired under the name *Matters of Life and Death*) was also defunded.

While the major station-based series employ the talents of independents in the production of some of their programs, the selection of producers is at the sole discretion of the series executive producer, generally without any systematic outreach and with no panel selection process. Procedures, therefore, lack the fundamental fairness provided by CPB's own policies, as well as federal policy in this area. As greater procedural control is ceded by CPB to the station producers, policies favoring programming diversity have been frustrated, and programming has become more homogeneous.

Frontline has far less diversity and fewer viewpoints than one would have a right to expect of the system's only regular documentary series. In fact, in the first five seasons of *Frontline*, seven producers made 42 of *Frontline*'s 75 programs, receiving 63 percent of the five seasons' budget of $16-million.

Moreover, *Frontline* producers do not retain editorial control or ownership of their work. When the series was first announced, independents protested the series' violation of CPB policies. Under questioning by the CPB Board at its March 3, 1982 meeting, then-Program Fund director Lewis Freedman conceded that the series could not be considered "independent." Yet CPB has consistently included *Frontline* in its calculation of independent funding.

In 1984, prompted by Congressional reauthorization hearings, CPB entered into negotiations with national independent producer representatives and agreed to exclude *Frontline* from the tally of independent production. Indeed, then-Board chair Sharon Rockefeller testified before a House Subcommittee that CPB had agreed that "the *Frontline* project, for example, does not fall within [CPB's] definition [of an independent production]" (Hearing Transcript, Serial No. 98-158, March 29, 1984). Notwithstanding those public assurances, CPB has continued to report *Frontline* as part of its fulfillment of the Congressional mandate to open its doors to independent producers.

C. Statistics Demonstrate the Declining Diversity in Public Television Programming and the Marginalization of Independent Production.

Based upon CPB's own figures for Fiscal Year 1987 (from the Program Fund Annual Report, dated September 19, 1987), only about 20 percent of its national program funds were submitted to panels of outside experts at the program selection stage, as required by Congress. These funds were distributed through what is called the Open Solicitation process. The rest of the funds were distributed in multi-million dollar block grants to stations and station consortia. (CPB's report erroneously includes as "subject to

panel" station-based series which are reviewed once each year, after-the-fact.)

In 1987, of even the relatively small portion of program funds remaining for distribution through the Open Solicitation, more than half was distributed to station productions. In the final analysis, only about 10 percent of CPB's national program production dollars were distributed by CPB directly to independent producers using the panel process required by Congress, and by CPB's own "Policies and Procedures."

The statistical impact is even more telling when we consider funding for public affairs, an area of production in which independents are perhaps best known. In 1987, less than 20 percent of CPB's public affairs funding (excluding *Frontline* funding) was distributed directly to independents for independent productions. This funding represented only six individual independent projects for the entire year!

VIII. INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS ARE PROPOSING A "NATIONAL INDEPENDENT PROGRAM SERVICE" TO INCREASE THE PARTICIPATION OF INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS AND TO PROMOTE DIVERSITY AND INNOVATION IN PUBLIC TV PROGRAMMING.

For most of the past 10 years, and despite clear Congressional policies and directives favoring diversity in program sources and points of view, the overriding trend in CPB funding has been away from the direct funding of independent producers and toward increased funding and control by stations and station consortia.

Independent producers, recognized by the first Carnegie Commission as an important resource but not addressed in legislation until 1978, have struggled for 10 years with vague or inadequate language. Representatives of the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers have met repeatedly with CPB officials in an effort to increase the participation of independent producers, but with little success.

Today, we are proposing that CPB be required to fund a National Independent Program Service with an unambiguous mandate: to serve audiences presently neglected by public television and to develop new audiences for innovative programming. These funds would constitute a "risk fund," a broadcast laboratory, a long-overdue research and development department, not just for public television but by example for American broadcasting as a whole. The past 10 years have provided overwhelming evidence that without such a discrete fund the station's headlong rush to commercialism will overwhelm all attempts at programming innovation. If we are dedicated to diversity, if we believe in the invaluable contribution of truly independent voices in our society, then we should not shy away from the responsibility of creating an entity unambiguously dedicated to this goal. While some will always argue that there is not enough money to take a risk on experimentation or to serve minority interests, we believe that a system which will not invest in its future will have no future. Surely out of an appropriation of more than 200-million taxpayer dollars, out of system revenues considerably greater than one-billion tax-exempt dollars, out of a 100-billion dollar television industry, we can afford to produce just a few hours a week of programming which will push forward the frontiers of American television. Surely there must be room on the vast broadcast spectrum for some programs over which the Nielsens do not cast their deadening pall. Isn't this what public television was supposed to do all along?

A National Independent Program Service would not take one dollar away from the system. In fact, it would provide a more efficient mechanism to insure that scarce dollars are directed where they are most needed: the production of diverse, new programming. We have proposed a National Independent Program Service, as opposed simply to a set-aside for independent productions, precisely because it offers an integrated broadcast solution to the challenge of programming diversity. This service would not just fund, but also package, distribute, and promote programming designed specifically to develop new public television audiences. It would bring coherence and vision to the body of independent production. It would work with individual station managers and with PBS to discover more effective ways to schedule innovative work. It would give character to the unorganized program schedule outside public television's prime time, encouraging more efficient use of public television licensees' airtime. This broadcasting mini-service would provide a lively counterpoint to the system's core prime time offerings.

Why are we so sure that a National Independent Program Service will do any better than CPB in assuring funding and distribution of independent productions of diversity and innovation? Won't this be likely to become just another inefficient bureaucracy superimposed on an existing one?

While no program can be assured carriage in a system where each of 300 licensees retains jealous control over its own schedule, we are confident that a National Independent Program Service will make it easier for stations to schedule and promote diverse, independent work effectively. A reliable stream of exciting, high-quality programming, skillfully packaged and promoted, will offer stations an irresistible incentive to carry independent work. It is inconceivable that a system reduced to reruns of *Lassie*, *Leave It to Beaver*, and endless repeats of imported British melodramas would find no place for programming from America's outstanding award-winning film and video producers.

The National Coalition's proposals are modest and achievable; they require no change in the essential structure of public broadcasting; they offer a unique chance to explore possible long-term scenarios for the future of public broadcasting. Our proposals recognize the essential new flavor of programming services insulated from the stations' commercial pressures and dedicated only to bringing all the voices of America—challenging, sometimes raucous, always dynamic—back to the airwaves. Our proposals will work; they have the overwhelming support of the independent producing community and many observers of the public broadcasting scene. The talent is there. All that is required is the creativity and resolve to establish a structure that will promote rather than frustrate the production of diverse and innovative programming for public broadcasting and the American public.

ODYSSEAN ADVENTURES: THE 1988 LEICESTER AND BRUSSELS INTERNATIONAL SUPER 8 FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVALS



Quebecois Jean Hamel was one of six international guests to receive a Medal of Honor of the City of Brussels, formally presented at the Hotel de Ville by cultural officer M. Richard Leclercq. Festival organizer Robert Malengreau applauds.

Courtesy author

Toni Treadway

It was an odd trip from the start. The only book I packed was my dog-eared copy of Edith Hamilton's *Greek Mythology*. This intuitive act augured the 10 strange, dark days spent at two super 8 film and video festivals in Leicester, England, and Brussels, Belgium. In the end I was convinced I should have packed *No Exit*, since I was trapped in screening rooms on both sides of the English Channel, subjecting myself to dozens of different works. Then again, perhaps Hamilton was appropriate reading, since what I saw included various personal reinterpretations of myths as well as some shocking scenes from real life. Unfortunately, I find it easy to overdose on personal myth-making.

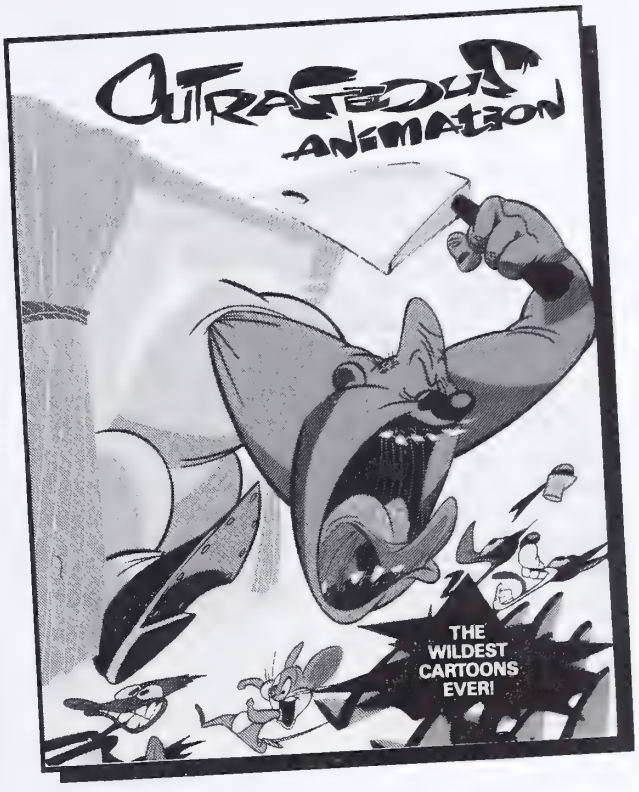
It took me some time to digest this experience. My first reaction, however, was outrage at the many technical problems of presentation which needlessly plagued both festivals. I have assumed that the first film festival inures one to all that follow. Since my first was 10 years ago—and super 8 at that—I had hoped to be inoculated by now against bad projection. I'm not. Although it is one of the most easily controlled aspects of a festival, I cannot understand why so many exhibitors of independent film do the tech part so poorly. In order to show super 8 film well, all that is needed is a reasonably good projector, the best lens, a cleaning kit for the projector and the booth window, some sound controls (preferably in the theater) and—most important—a careful, caring, technically proficient person fully responsible for the exhibition. This person must set the standards of acceptable projection and train each projectionist how to meet them, checking all systems well in advance of the event. In my book, this includes training a projectionist to clean the equipment before each screening and again during the screening if any original super 8 be shown. The projectionist should also stay within arm's reach of the projector to watch the image during the entire length of the film.

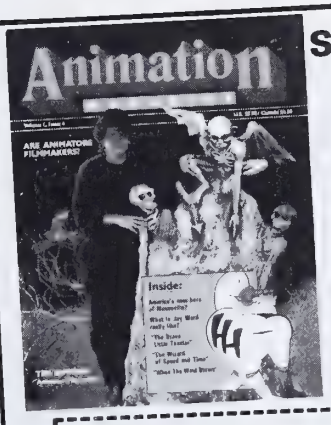
These ideas and the reasons for them seem obvious, until you attend a bad screening. Super 8 film can shift focus at splices and is susceptible to breaks or sprocket jumps. This is always true when original or festival circuit prints which have been shown countless times are projected. Focus changes exist in other gauges, too, and only the large gauges can be reliably shown with new projectors that do away with the need for manual focus adjustment. Additionally, projectionists need to engage an equally attentive assistant to ride the sound controls. In super 8, whether the film is an original or a print, one track or two, with stereo tracks or audiotape accompaniment, few screenings do not benefit from having a sound technician in the theater. This person can compensate for the changes in acoustics due to audience size or other variables. Super 8 filmmakers often have little access to technical help, and their sound tracks can be uneven or hissy. Beautifully mixed soundtracks do exist, but, in any case, the artist has worked hard to make the film and deserves quality exhibition.

Every screening room needs to have a system—a person or call button in the back of the hall—where problems can be reported. In both Leicester and Brussels I constantly took drastic actions to get the attention of the projectionists who made me so unhappy with their apparent obliviousness to focus, sound, and other prob-

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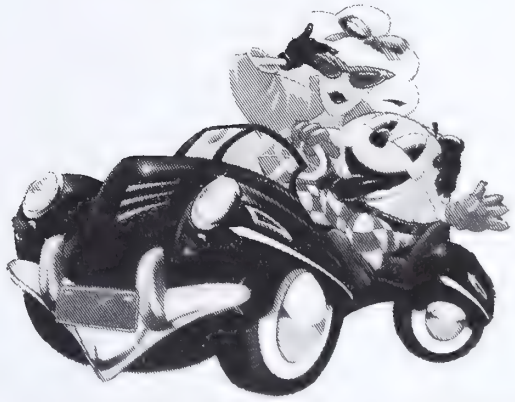
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lems. In Brussels, the extreme came when we had just finished watching an extraordinary documentary for which the filmmaker did live voiceover translation. Throughout his narration he softly pleaded into the mic with a projectionist deaf to his requests for focus. Fortunately, I found that diplomatic technical intervention can rapidly educate ignorant projectionists and improve their performances.

The aftertaste of my on-the-job training of projectionists greatly colors my ability to praise either of these two festivals, even though each had significant accomplishments. I believe in giving artists fine film and video exhibition or not showing the work at all.

□

Leicester's Laraine Porter is an exceptional mover and shaker for avant-garde film in England—so exceptional that the British Film Institute lauded her in 1986 with their Special Award for Independent Film and Television. Porter has single-handedly pulled off an international super 8 film festival for four years in England's Midlands with micro-resources at her disposal: about 300 square feet of office space in a city-run building for the arts, a handful of volunteers, and access to the Phoenix Arts Center and its auditorium across the street. In spite of this, Porter showcased super 8 film for four days and drew audiences hungry for new work from all over the British Isles. Her festival has generated requests for packages of super 8 films from other arts centers in England, some without their own projectors. However, the organization Porter heads—the Leicester Independent Film and Video Association—is too small to fully respond to groups wanting touring packages, projectors, and production workshops.

Part of the time in Leicester was profitably used for panels with hearty discussion from the floor about distribution schemes, standards, policies, and potential liaisons between producers, exhibitors, critics, and funders. Porter made the forum work by bringing in representatives from all these areas. The catalogue notes best demonstrate her vision: "Super 8 film culture (if we can talk of one such thing) in both institutional and cultural terms is relatively uncharted. There is little if any cataloguing or general recording of information. The Festival is the nearest thing in Britain to such a resource...committed to the development of super 8 as an important and integral part of British film culture, not out of slavish hanging on to a favorite gauge, but because it has a vital role to play."

In Leicester I met a filmmaker who had brought his wife and child across the country. Another videomaker travelled from Inverness in the far north of Scotland. Hundreds packed into the theater every day and night to watch movies from all over the world. They never moved from their seats (not even to correct tech problems) and later retired to the tiny bar in the foyer to eat or drink in intense conversational knots. The final night I met two students from Leicester whose eyes had been opened by the festival. Someone mentioned Federico Fellini, but they had never heard of him. They left the discussion eager to "see all his films on our VCR."

Leicester screened video and super 8, alternating them as if to present no distinction. This decision bears some reconsideration for video projected in a large theater with anything but the best beams. To me it looks disturbingly faded, grainy, or pixilly, comparing badly with well-projected film. Unfortunately, throughout the festival Porter did not get technical assistance of the quality she deserved or that matched her enthusiasm for presenting the work. Saturday night, during a 16mm screening that interrupted but also complemented the super 8 festival, the Phoenix staff was unable to focus, making the technical problems with super 8 seem minor by comparison.

The first evenings' screenings showcased a number of strong British works. Gad Hollander's *Euripides Movies* retold one man's version of classic Greek tragedies. U.S independents might sympathize with the character's endless climbs up long, curling staircases and forays into rooms where strange authorities do not fund his art. This videotape contrasted markedly with the colorful film animation that followed: David Coleman's *Croppy Boy*. This skillful but very literal clay animation retells an old song with the refrain of a wife singing to her husband, "You're drunk, you're drunk, you silly old man...," when he questions her about the stranger's boots by her bed. It's a playful romp that's more fun than most music videos, although the reactionary sexual politics are the same. Coleman was also invited to Brussels for a retrospective of his animated films.

Derek Jarman's *The Last of England* highlighted the Leicester festival, and many consider him the figurehead of British super 8. Jarman portrays the "world falling apart" with odd, lush, provocative juxtapositions, staging a young man stabbing a classical painting or a tulle-wrapped wedding party taking place at the sordid site of "post-industrial decline," as he explained in the program notes. His use of super 8 for production, super 8-to-video direct for post-production, and 35mm blow-ups for release presents an interesting method, albeit one not widely reproducible by filmmakers with restricted budgets. As ambitious as Jarman's feature film was the 84-minute super 8 *Jesus Der Film*, by Michael Brynntrup of West Germany. Brynntrup orchestrated 22 young German filmmakers and 120 actors, compiling 35 episodes of Jesus' life into a black and white extravaganza that Pasolini might have enjoyed.

Several packages of films were carried to both festivals as super 8 filmmakers become more aggressive about distribution of their work. One was imported by Australian Stephen Cummins. He'd come to Europe by pulling together *34 Degrees South, 151 Degrees East*, a two-and-a-half hour program of 17 works from the Australian avant-garde. The Australian Film Commission helps local filmmakers export their work by contributing funds for prints and catalogues in what might be a useful model for state arts councils in this country. The package's crowd pleaser was Michael Hill's emotionally bleak, beautifully composed black and white film *Adaptor*. I preferred Cummins' *Le Corps Imagé*, an experiment that consisted of projecting film of nudes on carefully choreographed and filmed nudes. And I'd advise keeping an eye out for Rhonda Kelly, maker of the film *Sunday Service*, which is a grisly tale of two black girlfriends en route to church. The Australians seem to have a strange sense of humor that is not lightened in their super 8 filmmaking.

The United States was represented by Al Nigrin's experimental film package *Celestial Cinema* and several combo super 8/video works that I brought to the festival. Reaction to the U.S. experimental work was cool, with Leicester audiences showing greater excitement for homegrown works. I found many of the British made films to be long on ideas but short on technique. For instance, much of the camerawork in Roy Duncan's short *Alone* was beautiful, producing a fine mood, but was marred by his apparent fondness for cutaways coupled with either the lack of time to reshoot those that are out-of-focus or an cavalier attitude towards the need to do so. Based on this and other disappointing films, I assumed that the festival did not prescreen and recommended preselection to the festival organizers. Sadly, these works *were* preselected and said to be the best of the British entries this year. No one would speculate why it was an off year. I left Leicester admiring the work of Laraine Porter while wishing her crew was more rigorous in selection and projection.

□

Jean Hamel, outgoing director of the Montreal super 8 festival, became my colleague-in-stress during both festivals. By the end of the Leicester event, Hamel voiced his concern to me of a "lack of rigor" in British super 8 filmmaking. Hamel runs a carefully preselected festival with a stated commitment to showing the best films under good conditions. Year after year his associates in Québec, Johanne Marcotte and Marie Brazeau, have been responsible for excellent presentation of super 8, surpassing all the other festivals in their attention to film handling and projection. I mention Hamel's festival and team in contrast to super 8's major showcase in Brussels. There, the world's greatest promoter of super 8, Robert Malengreau, organizes a festival that is high-style but total chaos.

Each year, press and government attention for the super 8/video festival in Brussels remains impressive, but maintaining exhibition standards is not a priority. Glitz and international guests, numbering about 30, provide the *raison d' etre* for this gathering. Meanwhile, mathematical ineptitude continues to plague the guests who are each asked by Malengreau to bring a program one to two hours in length. As these guests converge on

Brussels, they find that their program is not on the schedule and there are not enough program hours to accommodate all the work. The disgruntled group feels pitted against each other and against the clock. Any complaints receive a wave of the hand from the unflappable Malengreau, who delights in making sure guests attend late night avant-garde performances in chic bars and morning cocktail parties with venerable government cultural officers or contributing consul generals. The films are not shown well nor on time, making it virtually impossible to plan meetings with filmmakers, interviews, or meals.

Hamel and I found ourselves with the dubious honor of serving on the festival jury, which meant our mandatory attendance at an average of nine hours per day of films during the week and 15 hours per day on the weekend. This gave us a bit of credibility with the technicians, whom we confronted on the first day behind the scenes in order to firmly instruct, vowing to leave town if improvements were not made immediately.

Despite the chaos, the extraordinary achievement of the Brussels festival is that Malengreau seeks out, invites, and promotes remarkable super 8 *auteurs*, especially from the third world. This year the toasts of the festival were two filmmakers from the Philippines, Nick Deocampo and Raymond Red. Deocampo's three films exhibited a very raw and powerful use of super 8 for social ends. His *Oliver* intimately chronicles a young man whose life as an exotic dancer/transvestite exposes the sexual and economic oppression which is historic and current in Manila today. Oliver supports a family whose worldly effects can be stacked on a pushcart. His move to a tiny house is intercut with vivid close-ups of him preparing and performing his dance spectacles for men in seedy bars. The overflow audience in the theater scarcely knew how to react to this searing look at Manila's subculture. Malengreau's excellent publicity efforts drew audiences from the community of Brussel's Filipino expatriates, and Deocampo spent some of the week defending his unpopular choice to export from his homeland images which may be considered unattractive or disreputable.

Deocampo also screened two long films. *Children of the Regime* is a somewhat traditional documentary, but one filled with astounding, painful facts, such as how little cash an adult needs to purchase sexual favors from an eight-year-old child in Manila. While Deocampo ventured into youth detention centers to get that information, his persistence is best illustrated in his 85-minute *Revolutions Happen Like Refrains in a Song*, which recounts a personal revolution. This autobiographical work is informed by a steadfast determination to describe his own experiences—from the story of his absent father to his homosexuality—and to voice his concern about using or abusing Oliver, his decision to portray the exploitation of Filipino children, and his commitment to understanding the revolution in the streets.

This year, Deocampo left the Philippines to attend New York University on a Fulbright Scholarship. He is working on two sequels to his book *Short Film: Emergence of a New Philippine Cinema*, published by the Communication Foundation for Asia. While he needs the library and academic access and stimulation at NYU, he regrets his absence from Manila and activist cinema there. But, at age 28, he is proud to have taught Raymond Red, a young Filipino filmmaker who has already received some international attention (including an extensive U.S. tour in March 1988).

Raymond Red was showcased in Brussels with a festival Carte Blanche one evening. Red's films have power, but as allegory not documentary. His super 8 films *Kind*, *Enemy*, and *The Yawn* are hypnotic and suggestive. *Kind* places a young violin student needing solitude in a room with a dying man. It is never clear who the man is, and the relationship between the two characters is never revealed in a way we might understand in the West. Nor does this tale have a moral. What Red does is play out myths as clues to the existential situation of his culture. In his excellent *The Yawn*



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an insomniac delivers a monologue from the top bunk that eventually implicates the sound sleeper below. The film is intriguing, compelling, and, for me, unforgettable. The international jury spoke unanimously in praise of both Red and Deocampo.

I served on the video section of the jury in Brussels and saw plenty of televised myths. The best of that video paralleled the super 8 films where artists tried to make sense of their culture's myths. *The Sleep of Eneas*, a 34-minute video by Venezuelan Sammy Cucher, included a wonderful dance sequence in the middle of the tapes' five parts. *Eneas* begins on a beach—the starting point for many epic Venezuelan super 8 films—and unravels the progress of a man who can achieve power if he gives up his loved one. Cucher's half-dreamed, half-danced story uses contemporary images as it taps an ancient cultural vein. Cucher uses video effects more sparingly than many of his counterparts in the U.S., but this choice only forces him to refine his ideas.

Several video documentaries from the U.S. shown in Brussels elicited respectful reactions from the audience, who found them nonetheless dry and not particularly engaging. For the most part, the U.S. tapes tried to be "objective" reports in contrast to Deocampo's subjective presence and analysis. One video from the U.S. that did delight the international audience was Charles Jevremovic and Lisa Monrose's *Soul Soldier*, which was appreciated for stretching the music video genre with imaginative and delicate use of high-tech effects without going overboard with video toys. The jury awarded it a special prize.

The Brussels festival is arguably the most visible showcase for super 8 in the world. A vast audience filled the theater all week to see films. Beyond several nights of Belgian works in the national competition, Malengreau gave Carte Blanche to German filmmaker Knut Hoffmeister, the German production group Alte Kinder, Algerian Ahmed Zir, and a special section to a program of "Mad Movies," bizarre and science fiction works very popular with the Belgians.

The national portion of the festival parallels the international but offers very lucrative prizes to Belgian films. Those awarded national prizes were later shown to the international jury, which found them generally detestable. My colleague Hamel made a recommendation for withholding first prize in the international competition, because, while some films were quite good, "no film merited it." He was very concerned about sending a message to future generations of filmmakers that would encourage films with traditional form and dubious content. The international jury agreed with Hamel about the lack of true brilliance in this year's competition, but awarded prizes without unanimity, because they thought they should and to encourage efforts of filmmakers like Deocampo.

The question of how festivals support filmmakers and cinema with bad exhibition and socially acceptable decision-making was compounded by this discussion among the members of the international jury. After this year's trek to Brussels and Leicester, I continue to embrace super 8 for the access it allows filmmakers and super 8 festivals for their recognition of the marginal, passionate, and outlandish. But these and similar festivals too often tax their organizers to the point where vision and leadership is suppressed in order to ensure that the show goes on. Maybe it's time to reassess and encourage festivals to showcase fewer works under better conditions, thus encouraging us to take part in significant discussions that can move independent cinema forward.

Toni Treadway is based in Somerville, Massachusetts, where she and Bob Brodsky are finishing the third edition of their book Super 8 in the Video

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KINO BY KIDS

Karen Rosenberg

In afterschool classes funded and equipped by the government, children from seven to 17 can elect to learn filmmaking in some regions of the USSR. Last January, at the fifth biannual children's film festival held in Tbilisi, the capital of Soviet Georgia, I met some dynamic and innovative educators who are eager to trade ideas with colleagues. A children's animation studio in Dnepropetrovsk is devising a curriculum for young people of various ages. In Tbilisi's Pioneer Palace, Lali Geguchadze has put together courses in film history and film analysis for children.

The festival consisted of short movies not just for kids but by them. Fifty-four children's studios from various parts of the USSR submitted 125 films, of which 70 were chosen for screening. As a result of their training, the children are able to take an active role in almost all aspects of the festival. Not only did they project the movies, publish a festival newspaper, and announce each film, they were responsible for the preselection process. A children's jury also met—paralleled by an adult jury of film professionals—to award prizes. Young filmmakers prepared a film chronicle of the festival which was projected on the final day. The confidence and experience of these children and teenagers was impressive. Only the

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projection of 8mm film seemed to present some problems. The reason for this may be that nonprofessionals in the USSR are generally given 16mm film, equipment, and processing facilities.

Due to the constraints of my visa and airplane ticket, I arrived late and missed some films, but among those I saw the recurrence of ecological themes was striking. In their films, the children often expressed concern about the pollution of their local environments and the destruction of old buildings in their regions. Other works were simply fun or funny. One film, in which kids painted their faces, was particularly unusual, partly because it didn't contain a message but attempted to be surrealistic. After watching a number of films replete with conventional symbols of war and peace—hands clasped in front of a globe, U.S. Air Force planes in flight, a patriotic tribute to a soldier killed in Afghanistan—this approach to filmmaking proved refreshing.

The extent and advisibility of adult input in children's films were topics discussed by Soviet as well as foreign adults at the festival. (Invited guests came from France, Austria, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Poland, as well as the U.S.) In general, liberals argued that kids should have more freedom in conceiving and executing films, and it will be interesting to see how their position fares in the era of glasnost. This conflict touches on aesthetics as well as ideological content. One question raised in these discussions was: Can a good work exhibit the roughness of children's drawings or must it approach professional technical values?

Although the festival attracts films, young filmmakers, and their instructors from a number of Soviet republics, it is officially a Georgian event. Many hope that it will soon be given the status of a national festival and invite foreign children with their films. Because this possibility is under consideration, the date and place of the next festival have not been set. Leaders of children's film workshops or classes in the U.S. who wish to participate can write to: Grigory Chigogidze, Pioneerfilm, Pioneer Palace, 6 Rustaveli Prospect, Tbilisi, Georgia, USSR.

Karen Rosenberg is a writer whose work has appeared in Sight and Sound, *the* Nation, *the* Boston Globe, *and elsewhere.*

FIVF TAPE LIBRARY

The FIVF Festival Bureau has established a tape library of members' current works to expedite screenings for upcoming film and video festivals. Members interested in depositing their work in the library should contact: Kathryn Bowser, Festival Bureau director, FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, NY, NY 10012, (212) 473-3400. ½" and ¾" tapes will be accepted.

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IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser. Listings do not constitute an endorsement & since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

Domestic

AMERICAN FOLK CULTURAL FILM FESTIVAL, September, NY. Noncompetitive showcase featuring films & videos dealing w/ everyday Americans & their culture. About 22 works, both current & retrospective, screened. Doc & fiction features & shorts accepted. Fest may bring filmmakers to speak w/ their works. Entry fee: $5. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: July 1. Contact Susan Slyomovics, City Lore, 72 E. 1st St., New York, NY 10003; (212) 529-1955.

DANCE ON CAMERA FESTIVAL, January, NY. 17th annual competition for films & videos in cats incl. religious/liturgical dance, dance company/background, performance/dancer or dance company, biog/dancer or choreographer, technique/instruction, dance therapy, dance in education, music video w/ dance, experimental, gen'l dance themes. Certificates awarded. Entry fees: $15 (under 5 min.), $20 (5-10 min.), $30 (26-49 min.),. $35 (50-90 min.), $40 (over 90 min.). Discount for DFA members. Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact Susan Braun, executive director, Dance Films Assoc., 241 E. 34th St., Rm. 301, New York, NY 10016; (212) 686-7019.

DENVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 13-20, CO. Noncompetitive, invitational fest now in 11th yr, held in downtown Denver's Tivoli Theatres & Denver Center Cinema at Denver Center for Performing Arts. Plans for this edition incl. more than 100 film programs over the 8 day event. New int'l feature releases & ind. narrative films, docs, animated films, experimental works & shorts invited. Last yr films from 21 countries presented, w/ tributes to 10 directors, as well as roundtable organized by American-Soviet Film Initiative. Audiences around 50,000. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Send detailed descriptive info on work & fest will advise if sending print/cassette is appropriate. Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact Ron Henderson, director, Denver International Film Festival, 999 18th St., Suite 247, Denver, CO 80202; (303) 298-8223.

FILM ARTS FESTIVAL, Nov. 4-6, CA. Regional showcase for works by independent film & video artists residing in N. California only, now in 4th yr. Several screenings of films & videos at their "most passionate, irreverent & humorous" are sellouts & audiences number over 2500. Sponsored by Film Arts Foundation, nonprofit, membership service organization of independents in northern CA. Fest's entries arranged in thematic programs to accommodate short & odd-length pieces w/ longer ones, rarely seen older works paired w/ premieres & film & video programmed together. All genres & lengths accepted. No entry fee. Filmmakers receive fee for screenings. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: July 29. Contact Robert Hawk, fest director, Film Arts Festival, 3469th St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94130; (415) 552-8760.

INDEPENDENT FEATURE FILM MARKET, Oct. 4-14, NY. 10th anniv. of market showcase for new independent fiction feature films & docs. Over 300 buyers, agents & festival programmers from over 15 countries registered last yr. From beginnings as market focusing on U.S. ind. work, it has expanded to incl. limited number of English language films from other countries. Several world premieres. Showcase cats: feature section for dramatic & doc films over 75 mins, video section for broadcast quality short films & videos under 75 mins & works-in-progress section for filmmakers seeking development money or finishing funds. To enter, must be a current member of IFP, IFP/Midwest, IFP/Northern California, or IFP/West (membership fees $60/yr for filmmakers & $150/yr for companies). All entries previewed by Market Selection Committee, which has power to refuse entries & in '87 caused some complaints from film/videomakers (see "Final Cut at IFP Market," *The Independent*, Jan/Feb 1988 and "Letters," March 1988). Filmmaker appl. forms & registration info avail. at IFP starting June 1. Payment of fee allows 3 IFP members to rep film at market. Venues are Mark Goodson Theatre of NYC Dept. of Cultural Affairs & WNET/13. IFP also sponsors concurrent workshops/seminars on ind. filmmaking issues. Formats: (feature film) 35mm, 16mm, (video section) 3/4", (work-in-progress) 3/4". Deadline: mid-Aug. Contact Karen Arikian, program & market director, Independent Feature Project, 21 W. 86th St., New York, NY 10024; (212) 496-0909; telex: 238790 NYK.

NEW YORK LESBIAN & GAY EXPERIMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 13-18, NY. Premiering at NYC's Millennium last yr, fest presented 61 films by 37 filmmakers & attracted audiences of 2000. Organized because "lesbian & gay people can have an especially rich relationship to experimental film," fest seeks works having significant gay presence or perspective. Future plans incl. fest tour. Women & minorities encouraged to apply. Formats: 16mm, S 8. Send return postage w/ entry. Deadline: July 15. Contact Jim Hubbard, Lesbian & Gay Experimental Film Festival, 503 Broadway, Rm. 503, New York, NY 10012; (212) 505-1758.

Foreign

CINEMADART INTERNATIONAL ART FILM FESTIVAL, November, Spain. Competitive, accepts films & videos related to plastic arts, incl. doc & exper. films covering work, bios, or exhibits of work of artist, group, movement, or artistic phenomenon. Also films & videos made by artists. 3 prizes awarded to best films or videos. Work must be completed in previous 5 yrs. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: end of July. Contact Cinemadart, Centre Cultural de la Fundacio Caixa de Pensions, Passig de Sant Joan, 108, 08037 Barcelona, Spain; tel: 2588906; telex: 97121 FUCP-E.

MONTREAL WORLD FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 24-Sept. 4, Canada. Largest competitive film fest in N. America recognized by IFFPA, last yr showed over 130 features from more than 50 countries, w/ audiences over 250,000. Cats incl. Official Competition, Hors Concours (official selection out of competition), National Cinema, Cinema of Today & Tomorrow (New Trends), Panorama Canada & Tributes. Films entered in official comp. must be 70mm or 35mm, produced in 12 mos preceding fest, not entered in any competitive int'l fest or commercially released except in country of origin. Competition shorts must be under 15 mins. TV films produced for theatrical release eligible. Prizes incl. (feature) Grand Prix of the Americas for best film, Best Actor/Actress & 2 Jury Prizes; (short) Montreal Grand Prix & Jury Prize; Air Canada sponsored prize for Most Popular Film; FIPRESCI prize. Entries in other sections may be 70mm, 35mm, 16mm or video produced in preceding 12 mos & Canadian premieres. Montreal Int'l Film, Video & TV Market (Aug. 29-Sept. 3) features over 1000 buyers & sellers from 50 countries. Deadline: July 11. Contact Serge Losique, fest director, Montreal World Film Festival, 1455 de Maisonneuve Blvd. W., Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3G 1M8; (514) 848-3883; telex: 05-25472 WOFILMFEST.

SAN SEBASTIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 15-24, Spain. Now in 36th yr, this is one of Spain's major competitive fests & seeks to show examples of highest quality in current world cinema. Last yr about 130 films screened in & out of competition. Sections incl. official competition, Zabaltegi (open space) & Breakfast w/ Diamonds (market space). Competition films must be 35mm (primarily more commercial works), produced in preceding 12 mos, not shown in other competitive fests. 35mm shorts under 30 mins accepted for screening in competition. Zabaltegi section accepts 35mm & 16mm films & video & may accept narrative/experimental works. Int'l jury awards: Great Gold Shell for best feature, Gold Shell for best short, special jury prize, San Sebastian Prize for best director & prizes to best actor/actress. 1st or 2nd feature film directors in any fest section eligible for a $45,000 prize contributed by the CIGA Hotel chain. Films presented w/ Spanish subtitles. Deadline: Aug. 1. Wendy Lidell is US contact & generally hosts fest director during US selections. Interested filmmakers should contact her immediately at: 125 E. 4th St., New York, NY 10003; (212) 475-8237. Fest address: Diego Galan, director, San Sebastian International Film Festival, Apartado de Correos, 397, 20080 San Sebastian, Spain; tel: 43-429625; telex: 38145 FCSS E.

TORONTO FESTIVAL OF FESTIVALS, Sept. 8-17, Canada. Programmers Kay Armatage & David Overbey travel to int'l fests throughout yr to search for & invite recent & upcoming releases to this widely acclaimed celebration, now in 13th yr. Large local audiences give overwhelming public support, there is large turnout of US film execs & film stars & media. Most films are N. American or world premieres. Last yr over 200 films from 36 countries screened. Noncompetitive, although fest-goers vote for most popular film. Cats incl. Galas (premieres), Contemporary World Cinema, Perspective Canada, New Cinema, Special Presentations, National Cinema, Archival Program & Spotlight. Parallel Trade Forum industry conference attracts 100s of delegates (900 last yr) & offers workshops on creative issues, funding & distribution, providing venue for business meetings & contacts. Features & docs (shown in sidebar) accepted. Only Canadian shorts may participate. Entries must be Canadian premiere. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: July 15. Contact Toronto Festival of Festivals, 69 Yorkville Ave., Suite 205, Toronto, Ontario M5R 1B8, Canada; (416) 967-7371; telex: 06-219724 FILMCONS.

CORRECTION: The listing for Festival of Film Consacrated to Art in the April *Independent* was incorrect. It is a biennial fest & next edition is in June 1989. New name is Int'l Biennial of Films on Art. Contact Gisele Breteau, Int'l Biennial of Films on Art, Les Ateliers, Cinema du Musee, Musee National d'Art Moderne, Centre National d'art et de Culture Georges Pompidou, 75191 Paris Cedex 04, France; tel: 42771233.

CLASSIFIEDS

The Independent's **Classifieds** column includes all listings for "Buy • Rent • Sell," "Freelancers" & "Post-production" categories. It is restricted to members only. Each entry has a **250 character limit** & costs **$15 per issue.** Ads exceeding this length will be edited. Payment must be made at the time of submission. Anyone wishing to run a classified ad more than once must pay for each insertion & indicate the number of insertions on the submitted copy. Each classified ad must be typed, double-spaced & worded exactly as it should appear.

Deadlines for **Classifieds** will be respected. These are the 8th of each month, **two months** prior to the cover date, e.g., June 8 for the August/September issue. Make check or money order—no cash, please—payable to FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

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TECHNICAL PUBLICATIONS: Any 16mm or 35mm camera manual (specify) $20; Audio Design (Mechanics of Sound Recording) $36; Optical Printer Prep. $20; Budget Form Set $10; Lens Test Glossary $20. Crosscountry Film Video, 724 Bloomfield St., Hoboken, NJ 07030. Write for used equipment catalog.

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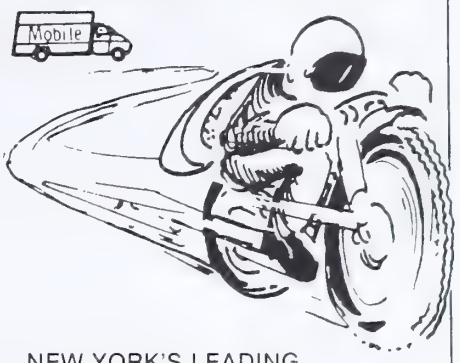
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NOTICES

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. **The Independent** reserves the right to edit for length.

Deadlines for **Notices** will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date, e.g., June 8 for the August/September issue. Send notices to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Conferences • Workshops

CHICAGO FILMMAKERS workshop on Sound Recording for Film & Video, June 4; fee: $55 general/$45 members. Contact: Chicago Filmmakers, 1229 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657; (312) 281-8788.

VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP SUMMER INSTITUTE offers 1 & 2 wk workshops in photography, critical studies, book arts, printing, video & computer graphics, June 27-Aug. 5. Grad. & undergrad. college credit avail. thru SUNY Brockport. Courses incl. Film Animation, Amiga Computer: Animation & Sound, Video Seminar & Intro to Small Format Video. $275/1-wk workshop; $425/2-wk workshop. Summer Institute, VSW, 31 Prince St., Rochester, NY 14607; (716) 442-8676.

COLLECTIVE FOR LIVING CINEMA summer filmmaking workshops: Lighting for Film, June 4, 5 & 9; Optical Printing, June 11, 12 & 14. Tuition: $110, 10% discount for members. Contact: Collective, 41 White St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 925-3926.

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE: June workshops for educators, students & media professionals at the AFI Campus in LA—Prod. Research, June 16-18; Video Prod., June 20-July 1; Animation, June 20-24. Contact: AFI, Summer Workshops, Educ. Services, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027; (800) 221-6248; (213) 856-7725.

CALIFORNIA LAWYERS FOR THE ARTS: Copyright clinics on 2nd & 4th Sats each mo. during '88 (except Nov. 26 & Dec. 24). Drop-in consultations of approx. 20 min. from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at CLA Library, Bldg. C, Rm. 255 (2nd fl.), Fort Mason, San Francisco, CA, $10 members; $20 nonmembers. CLA, Fort Mason Center, Bldg. C, San Francisco, CA 94123; (415) 775-7200.

Films • Tapes Wanted

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER seeks tapes for ongoing Thursday night, weekly Community Video Screening Series. Open to all types of video & film transferred to video: doc., alternative, self-empowerment, youth empowerment, advocacy, resistance, experimental, installations & multimedia. Hand deliver or mail tapes w/ pertinent info & return postage to: Maria Beatty, Screening Director, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 966-4510.

AIDS: THE ARTISTS' RESPONSE: An exhibition of artwork presented by the Wexner Ctr for the Visual Arts/Univ. Gallery of Fine Art at Ohio State, Columbus, Feb.-Mar. 1989. Curator Jan Zita Grover seeks film, video, photographs, paintings, drawings, sculpture, performance, installations, or other AIDS-related visual/audio projects. Send 35mm slides or VHS tapes w/ SASE mailers, resumé &/or cover letter by July 1, 1988 to: Lynette Molnar, Univ. Gallery of Fine Art, 1880 N. High St., Columbus, OH 43201; (614) 292-0330.

THE TERMINAL: New gallery & performance space seeks experimental films & videos for monthly screenings. Objective is to show artists' work to dance, performance & fine artists & to create new outlet for experimental film & videomakers. Suzanne Boucher; (212) 254-5958, or Terminal; (718) 783-8946.

NEW WORKS NEEDED: New UHF station in Boston looking for work by ind. film/video artists. For consideration, send examples to: Music/Media, Box 1341, Gloucester, MA 01930.

IND. FILMS & TAPES WANTED by distributor to health care and library markets. Particularly interested in work dealing with maternal/child health, nutrition & handicaps. Offering effective direct mail promo. Contact: Motion, Inc. (202) 363-9450.

Opportunities • Gigs

HALLWALLS CONTEMPORARY ARTS CTR seeks film curator to program & administer visiting filmmakers' series & thematic repertory series, assist in grantwriting, adm. travelling exhs, produce catalogs & work w/ outreach. Flexible position w/ opportunity for developing highly visible program. Salary commensurate w/ experience. Full-time position w/ benefits begins Aug. 1, 1988. Submit resumes & support material by July 1 to: Hallwalls, 700 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14202.

ELECTRONIC ARTS INTERMIX seeks full-time distribution coordinator for Artists' Videotape Distribution Service. Professional working experience in media arts field preferred; computer skills, tech. knowledge & foreign languages a plus; good org. & communications skills. Paid benefits provided. Contact: Robert Beck, EAI, 10 Waverly Pl., New York, NY 10003; (212) 473-6822.

P/T VIDEO INSTRUCTOR & p/t or f/t administrator for Youth at Risk Program wanted by Sidewalks of New York Productions, a nonprofit theater/ind. video company. Will teach 1/2" production & editing, help produce short video pieces, PSAs & archival documentation. Administrator will supervise program, keep records, assist in grant appls., research funding sources, develop program components. Send resumés to: Sidewalks of New York Prod., Box 968, Old Chelsea Station, New York, NY 10113.

Resources • Funds

WESTERN STATES REGIONAL MEDIA ARTS FELLOWSHIPS: $1000-$5000 for film/video artists in AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, UT, WA, WY & Pacific Terr. Appl. deadline: June 15. Contact: Patti Bruck, Rocky Mountain Film Center, Hunter 102, Box 316, Univ. Of Colo., Boulder, CO 80309; (303) 492-1531.

ARTISTS/WRITERS COLONY: ACTS Institute offers independent residencies of 1 wk-6 mos for performing & visual artists, writers & composers in waterfront retreat setting. Appls accepted year-round & guidelines may be obtained by sending SASE to: Mr. Norman, ACTS Institute, Inc., Box 10153, Kansas City, MO 64111; (816) 753-0208.

INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION FUND 1988: Sponsored by Southwest Alternative Media Project provides grants for ind. film & videomakers residing in TX, AK, OK, KS, NE, MS, PR & U.S. Virgin Islands. 1 appl. per individual permitted. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: IPF 1988, SWAMP, 1519 W. Main, Houston, TX 77006.

EXPERIMENTAL TV CTR: Accepting appls for Fall '88 residency. Offers artists opp. to study techniques of image processing during 5-day intensive residency. Appls. must incl. resumé & project description indicating how image processing will be integrated. First-time appls: send tape of recently completed work on 3/4" or VHS w/ SASE. Deadline: July 15. Contact: ETC, 180 Front St., Owego, NY 13827; (607) 687-1423.

WOMEN MAKE MOVIES AT STARRETT CITY: Residencies of 2-3 days at Starrett City media facilities being offered to independent women film & video artists by Women Make Movies & Starrett City TV. Artists are invited to submit proposals on an ongoing basis. Contact: Karesha Kyi, coordinator, WMM, 225 Lafayette St., Ste. 211, New York, NY 10012; (212) 925-0606.

WRITERS GUILD OF AMERICA, EAST, in conjunction with New York State Council on the Arts, will award 4 $5,000 grants for writing and preparing video docs. Applicants must have established interest in independently produced video docs. Projects funded must be produced on videotape. Appl. incl. proposal, budget & credit list w/ emphasis on writer or writer/prod. credits. Appl. deadline: July 1. Request appl. from: WGAe Foundation, 555 W. 57th St., New York NY 10019.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS: Advancement Grant organizational deadline: May 5 for "notice of intent to apply," June 2 for submitting complete appl. Contact: Advancement Program, Rm. 617, NEA, Nancy Hanks Ctr., 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES: Humanities Projects in media deadline: Sept. 16, 1988. Contact: James Dougherty, NEH, 1100 Penn. Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 786-0278.

THE MEDIA BUREAU provides funds for presentation of video & audiotapes in NY State, incl. screenings, installations & performances of multi-media works incorporating substantial amounts of video or radio, workshops, short residencies, tech. asst & equip. access relating to these projects. Appls reviewed continuously. Contact: Media Bureau, The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St., New York, NY 10011; (212) 255-5793.

MIDATLANTIC ARTS FOUNDATION: Visual Arts Residency Program appl. deadline: July 15. Contact: MidAtlantic Arts Foundation, 11 E. Chase St., Ste. 1A, Baltimore, MD 21202; (301) 539-6656.

NEW YORK COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES: Proposals for project support deadline: June 1. Contact: NYCH, 198 Broadway, 10th fl., New York, NY 10038; (212) 233-1131.

SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION Grant deadline: Aug. 15 for individuals & orgs. Contact: SC Arts Comm., 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201; (803) 734-8696.

SUMMARY OF THE AIVF/FIVF BOARD AND MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

The annual Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) membership meeting was held on March 18, 1988, at the New School for Social Research. Following an introduction by executive director Lawrence Sapadin and a brief summary of advocacy activities by board chair Robert Richter, staff members presented their reports: Martha Gever and Patricia Thomson on *The Independent*, Kathryn Bowser on the Festival Bureau and Information Services, Ethan Young on Membership and Seminars, and Morton Marks on Financial Affairs. The newly hired administrative assistant, Emily Fisher, was also introduced. The question and answer session that followed included discussion of *The Independent*'s focus and prospective audience, suggestions for information services, and the status of regional representation. Following the staff reports, Young took nominations for the AIVF board of directors.

The board of directors of AIVF and the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF) met on March 19, 1988.

Karen Ranucci, the coordinator of the Rockefeller Foundation International Production Resources Project, reported that her research on Latin America was nearing completion, and that research on the Asian guide has begun. FIVF expects to publish the Latin American volume first, rather than wait for the other sections to be completed.

The full board officially ratified and approved the proposal for the creation of a National Independent Program Service as developed and advanced by the Advocacy Committee. Advocacy Committee chair Robert Richter reported that National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers (NCIPBP) has successfully put the proposal for a National Independent Program Service on Congress' agenda, but that the Coalition has exhausted the $15,000 raised in the fall to hire a coordinator and conduct a lobbying effort. The board discussed additional fund-raising strategies.

Barton Weiss, membership committee chair, said that the committee supports the idea of regional representatives, but is unsure how to proceed. The board felt that the upcoming membership directory would help ascertain the need for representatives. Weiss also proposed that a mailing asking for volunteers accompany the board election ballot mailing. With regard to FIVF's seminar program, the board recommended that seminar notices be mailed to the national list, not just the Northeast. This would not only help heighten awareness of FIVF's activities, but, if accompanied by a pre-order form for seminar cassettes, would make the information covered in the seminars more widely available to members. A task force, consisting of Weiss, Richard Lorber, Robert Aaronson, and Deanna Morse, was established to review the seminar program.

Sapadin reported that the FIVF Donor-Advised Fund was beginning its second round with a commitment from the Benton Foundation to contribute an additional $10,000 for productions that explore the impact of media on society. In addition, former AIVF board member Dan Edelman and his family have expressed interest in providing at least $10,000, bringing the total this year to over $60,000.

In other staff business, the board was informed that a new in-house advertising director for *The Independent*, Chase Morrison, was recently hired.

Sapadin said that FIVF was applying for a grant from the National Alliance of Media Arts Centers Management Assistance Program to hire management consultants specializing in nonprofit management to conduct a long-range planning process. A meeting/retreat for this purpose is projected for September 1988.

The board agreed to postpone the 1988 Indie Awards from May to October after Sapadin reported that the planned site, the American Museum of the Moving Image, was behind in its construction schedule and would not be open until September. A consensus was reached that the board would select six Indie Awards, plus one special board award. Board members agreed they should not be eligible for nomination. The board then went into executive session and selected award recipients.

The next board meeting has been scheduled for July 15 and 16, 1988. **Meetings are open to the public and members are encouraged to attend. Phone for details and to confirm date, time, and place before a meeting.**

AIVF members are encouraged to participate in committees. If you are interested in helping expand membership services, working on the Indie Awards and other development projects, or getting involved with advocacy, write to board chair Robert Richter, c/o AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012, or telephone executive director Lawrence Sapadin at the AIVF offices for more information: (212) 473-3400.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, an information clearinghouse, and a grant making program. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, foundations and organizations: The New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fund, the Beldon Fund, the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, the Consolidated Edison Company of New York, the Benton Foundation, the Funding Exchange, and the dozens of organizations that advertise in *The Independent*.



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COVER: Throughout Sheila McLaughlin's 1987 dramatic feature *She Must Be Seeing Things*, Agatha—played by Sheila Dabney—is on the lookout for her lover Jo's sexual infidelities. Sexuality has always been central to the fascination exercised by narrative films—whether overtly or through the subtleties of editing, camerawork, lighting, mise-en-scène, music, and other cinematic elements. And feminist film scholars have written widely on the operations of sexuality on the screen in order to reveal the relationship between representations and sexual politics. However, most of this work has been limited to discussions of heterosexual dynamics. In "Girl Crazy: Lesbian Narratives in *She Must Be Seeing Things* and *Damned If You Don't*"" Martha Gever examines two films where lesbian fantasies and attractions provide the tensions that propel the narratives of the two films. Photo: Anita Bartsch.

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LETTERS

CRITICAL CLARITY

To the editor:

Thanks for Quynh Thai's upbeat article on the New York Film Festival's changing of the guard [April 1988]. Just a quick comment on the quote attributed to me. I can't imagine myself saying, "I prefer conventional work" to films by Brakhage and the others mentioned in the same paragraph. I did say that I prefer *good* conventional films to *bad* experimental films—a reasonable rule of thumb, it seems to me, for personal movie-going and festival programming alike.

—David Sterritt
New York, NY

Quynh Thai replies:

David Sterritt is right. He didn't say that he prefers conventional work to films by Bruce Conner, Stan Brakhage, Su Friedrich, and Robert Breer. What he did say is that he is not averse to conventional work but hopes that less predictable films will be programmed in the festival—implying that he does not want to write off *all* conventional films. I appreciate the clarification.

INTERACTIVE DISKOURSE

To the editor:

Lucinda Furlong's article "Electronic Backtalk: The Art of Interactive Video" in your May issue inspired me to talk back. References to the videodisk *Lorna* were simplistic. The disk intended to offer viewer/participants opportunities to not simply have "old wine in a new bottle," or to branch to three pre-set endings, but to direct the story, move the plot not only forward but backwards, change the timing, or reorder the segments (thus shifting interpretation and point of view). Breaking into a new form begins with exploration, not definition. The space for choices within a pre-set structure invites possibilities for ordered wandering. There are many routes to interactivity, not the least of which are the advances made with CDI, DVI, and Hypercard. What Furlong referred to as hyperbole was optimism. Without that the adventure into the unknown would not only be more difficult, but not nearly as much fun.

—Lynn Hershman
San Francisco, CA

Lucinda Furlong replies:

I did not cite *Lorna*, as Lynn Hershman implies, as an example of what Allan Kaprow metaphorically called old wine in a new bottle. However, I did make a distinction between Hershman's work and her writing on the subject of interactive videodisc, which is symptomatic of what Kaprow identifies as a behaviorist approach to video technology. In the article by Hershman that I quoted, she writes, "Computers and interactive video and discs, slow-scan systems and satellites have consummated a Techno/Faustican marriage that has bred Cyborgian progeny." Optimism or hyperbole?

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* FIVF Board of Directors only

TAX INCENTIVES: CONGRESS TO CONSIDER EXEMPTIONS FOR FREELANCE ARTISTS

Independent film and video producers may get some tax relief if H.R. 4473, an amendment to the 1986 Tax Reform Act introduced by Representative Thomas J. Downey (D-New York), is enacted by Congress. Downey's bill, intended to revise Section 263A of the recent tax law, provides freelance artists, including many independent film and video producers, exemption from the uniform capitalization rules that went into effect for the 1987 tax year [see "Breaking the Code: The Impact of the New Tax Act" and "Artists Act to Reform Tax Reform Act" in the March 1988 issue of *The Independent*].

In discussions about the likelihood of an amendment or a technical corrections bill that would correct the 1986 Tax Reform Act, film and video production has often been perceived as a thorny issue for legislators because of the possibility that major independents like Steven Spielberg or Lorimar might be able to take advantage of an exemption from uniform capitalization for independent producers. Downey's bill addresses this concern by including language that explicitly names film- and videomakers among the artists covered by the exemption but limits eligibility for the exemption to those film or video producers who incur or pay an aggregate of $75,000 or less for indirect production expenses during a tax year.

In his comments introducing the bill in the House of Representatives on April 27, Downey stated, "[V]ery substantial administrative and accounting burdens, including allocation and income forecasting requirements that are unlikely to be manageable by either taxpayers or the Internal Revenue Service, would be imposed on freelance writers, photographers, and artists by the uniform capitalization requirements." The burden to which Downey refers is the requirement in the 1986 Act that an artist's expenses be allocated to specific works and that deductions for those costs can be taken only when the work is sold. Although film- and videomakers have always had to capitalize their direct production costs—i.e., expenses such as film stock and camera rentals were only deductible against revenues from a given film/video project—they have been able to deduct *indirect* expenses (e.g., rent, telephone, office supplies) fully each year. The new law requires capitalization of indirect costs as well.

As the impact of 263A became evident to artists and arts organizations, campaigns to reverse the rule were launched. In 1987, writers and photographers obtained the promise of relief when a Technical Corrections Bill granting those groups an exemption was approved by the House Committee on the Budget. In December, however, the bill was sacrificed in the budget reconciliation process that occupied Congress at the close of the 1987 session. Subsequently, a broader coalition of groups representing various categories of freelance artists, including the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, founded Artists for Tax Equity (AFTE) in order to pool resources and jointly persuade Congress that an exemption is necessary. Initially, letter-writing and fundraising campaigns were mounted, and on April 15 New York City artists staged a rally in front of the main branch of the New York Public Library.

Downey's proposed legislation represents the first step in realizing AFTE's goal. In addition to garnering support for H.R. 4473, similar legislation in the Senate will be needed to change the law. One candidate for sponsorship of such legislation is Senator Daniel Moynihan (D-New York), whose constituency includes many of the artists protesting the 263A requirements and who championed the exemption for freelancers contained in last year's Technical Corrections Bill. On the day of the Public Library rally, Moynihan released a statement criticizing what he called "one of the most ill-conceived aspects of the current tax code" and pledged, "Senator [Bill] Bradley [D-New Jersey] and I will introduce an amendment to end the confusion; to clarify that artists can deduct expenses in the year they incur those expenses." In a statement issued the same day, the junior senator from New York, Republican Alfonse D'Amato, joined his colleague in denouncing the application of uniform capitalization rules to artists as "illogical, unreasonable, and probably unproductive" and likewise promised to advocate an exemption for artists and writers.

Then, in what might be interpreted as a preemptive response, on May 13 the Internal Revenue Service announced that it would alter the requirements spelled out in 263A. According to the newly issued IRS Regulation 88-62—an alternative method of compliance with the uniform capitalization rules—writers and artists, including independent media producers, will be allowed to deduct their expenses over a three-year period, regardless of the flow of income from a project: 50

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percent in the first year, and 25 percent in each of the second and third years. Downey, however, is not satisfied by this revision. "The I.R.S. has given authors and artists only half a loaf. The bottom line is that when we have a tax bill, we have to correct this problem if we're going to treat the authors as they should be treated, for sound business practice and for encouraging artistic pursuit," he told the *New York Times*. AFTE concurs and plans to move ahead with its lobbying. In a letter sent by AFTE to the House Ways and Means Committee and the Congressional Arts Caucus, AFTE argued, "It is the view in the arts community that this amortization period is a simple tax grab, an inequitable attempt to garner additional revenue from an arbitrarily targeted group. Under the alternative plan, as under capitalization, artists must remain out of pocket for years while inflation erodes the value of expense deductions that other businesses can deduct without a hiatus." By introducing this alternative method, AFTE pointed out, "[T]he IRS has acknowledged that artists are not manufacturers, and that it is not appropriate to apply capitalization to us."

Paul Skrabut, the Washington representative for Artists for Tax Equity, estimates that the H.R. 4473 will be taken up in the House in June. Perhaps by late summer an exemption will be codified and the many artists who obtained four-month extensions for filing their 1987 tax returns will be able to avoid the convoluted calculations and additional taxes imposed by the uniform capitalization rules.

RENEE TAJIMA AND MARTHA GEVER

MACARTHUR FOUNDATION BOOSTS MEDIA FUNDING

Two years after making a $7.5-million dollar splash in the U.S. media arts scene—substantial grants to the Learning Channel for its *The Independents* series, 34 media arts centers, and several film projects—the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation is moving forward as one of the largest private funders of independent media. For fiscal year 1987, the foundation allocated $927,500 to 48 media arts centers, $300,000 to two PBS series—*Alive from Off Center* and *P.O.V.*, the independent documentary series premiering this July—up to $4.5-million to a new Library Video Classics project aimed at providing public libraries with tapes of prominent Public Broadcasting Service series, $200,000 to the Learning Channel for *The Independents*, and $1.5-million to environmental groups for the production of five television and film documentaries.

William Kirby, vice president of the foundation's board of directors, explains the rationale behind these funding decisions: "We felt the most important influence we could exert was to pay producers and get their works distributed as widely as possible." Kirby attributes the unprecedented support of the Learning Channel's *The Independents* series since 1986 and its recent interest in *Alive from Off Center* and *P.O.V.* to these two identified goals. Both the Learning Channel, which pays $210 per minute, and *P.O.V.*, which offers $300 per minute for acquisitions, remain the highest paying independent showcases in the country. "The question of PBS and its relationship to independents is of great concern to us," adds Kirby. "We feel we may be able to help by inducing PBS, through our own example, to pay more fairly for independent works."

But compensation for producers and expanded distribution have not been the only areas where MacArthur has applied its weight. In 1987, the foundation increased the number of media arts centers it funded from 34 to 48. Among the recipients of larger grants were the National Alliance of Media Arts Centers, which was awarded the only $50,000 grant last year, the Bay Area Video Coalition, Boston Film/Video Foundation, Capital Children's Museum, the Center for New Television, Downtown Community Television, Facets Multimedia, Film Forum, Film in the Cities, Film/Video Arts, the Museum of Modern Art, the Northwest Film and Video Center, Pacific Film Archive, Pittsburgh Filmmakers, the Rocky Mountain Film Center, and the University of California at Los Angeles Film and Television Archives—all of which received $30,000. $7,500 and $15,000 grants went to the other media centers.

Undeniably, the MacArthur Foundation has become a major force in media in this country. The foundation's staff says that it spends 90 cents for every federal dollar going to the field. But will MacArthur ever give grants for production of more than a few individual films or tapes? Judging from its three-year record and interviews with foundation staff, most likely it will not. The risks and demands on resources undertaken by a funder that entertains individual production proposals partly explains this posture. As Kirby explains, "We want to be useful, but we cannot take great risks. The total media funding needed in the U.S. is too high for [us] to ever become a major source of funding."

Nevertheless, MacArthur is not absolutely adverse to supporting production. Last year, for instance, the foundation granted $5-million to WNET-New York and WTTW-Chicago for Bill Moyers' "Conversations on Democracy," $250,000 to Five Star International to produce a documentary on Chernobyl for the *Frontline* series, and several smaller grants to organizations to produce films on environmental issues. But they are not inviting proposals from individual producers unallied with a PBS station or an organization involved in projects unrelated to MacArthur's other grant-making programs: health, international peace and cooperation, and the global environment.

In terms of significant new initiatives, the MacArthur Foundation is currently developing its Library Video Classics program, which will distribute copies of 10 to 20 established PBS series such as *Masterpiece Theater* and *Great Performances* to approximately 1,000 public libraries. The foundation is also planning to build its own media library, a collection of 25 tapes on the issues related to its other program areas, and will donate these tapes to the libraries participating in the Library Video Classics project. Says Virgil Grillo, media consultant to MacArthur, director of the Rocky Mountain Film Center, and a member of *The Independents*' informal production/programming team: "The MacArthur Foundation sees itself doing [with electronic media] what the Carnegie Foundation did years ago with print—acknowledging the fact that most information now gets passed through media."

Other than its experiment in library distribution, MacArthur spokespeople say that the foundation's ventures into media will be contained in the coming years. Funding to media centers will probably continue, as will support for the PBS and Learning Channel showcases. Two more Learning Channel series are currently in the works—*Spirit of Place*, curated by *Alive from Off Center* executive producer John Schott and staff producer Helen DeMichiel, and another on aging, curated by Terry Lawler, director of TV/Video Services at the American Film Institute. Without commenting on details of future plans, Grillo says, "The presiding posture will develop in significant increments. If there is a bulk increase, it will be program-related."

QUYNH THAI

Man's Magazine articles brought Harry Hoxsey's cancer clinics to national attention in 1954. The story of Hoxsey's 35-year battle with the American medical establishment over his herbal cancer remedy is the subject of Ken Ausubel's _Hoxsey: Quacks Who Cure Cancer?_, which over 70 Congresssional representatives recently had the chance to screen.

Courtesy Realidad Productions

HOXSEY GOES TO WASHINGTON

"The National Institute of Cancer's claims about improvements in cancer treatment are about as inflated as the military's claims about body counts in Vietnam," says Ken Ausubel. As director of *Hoxsey: Quacks Who Cure Cancer?*, a documentary on alternative cancer treatments and their suppression by the medical establishment with cooperation from the federal government, Ausubel is well acquainted with the manners in which holistic medicine and "unorthodox" cancer treatments have been driven from the United



States by those who stand to profit from conventional cures. Recently Ausubel had an opportune chance to share his findings and film with a select audience of 200, which included representatives from 70 Congressional and at least four Senatorial offices, plus several staff-members from the Office of Technology Assessment.

Special screenings of independent productions for Congressional gatherings are rare events. In recent years only a couple of films have been given such a showcase, according to Ausubel: Victoria Mudd and Maria Florio's *Broken Rainbows*, a work on the government's relocation of a Navajo community to serve energy development interests, was shown for two weeks on the Hill, resulting in Senator Alan Cranston writing legislation on this matter. Allan Francovich's film on U.S. policy in Central America, *The Houses Are Full of Smoke*, was screened to counteract intensive contra-aid lobbying efforts this past winter.

Hoxsey's screening came about after Michael Torrusio, an aide to Republican Representative Guy V. Molinari from Staten Island, saw the feature-length documentary at the Margaret Mead Film Festival. Torrusio was coordinating an event for the Alliance for Alternative Medicine—acting as an individual rather than in association with Molinari's office—and thought *Hoxsey* could provide just the right overview and impact. He guessed right. Many of the aides in attendance were young, had parents or grandparents with cancer, and were clearly impressed by the film's arguments, based on the feedback Torrusio received.

Ausubel also believed the screening had its desired effect. He had numerous requests for cassettes of *Hoxsey* from Congressional aides who wanted their bosses to see the work. The timing is propitious. This spring the Office of Technology Assessment is due to release a two-year study on alternative therapies—the result of pressure from legislators such as Molinari. The report is bound to generate a flurry of interest on the Hill, particularly as hearings on the issue

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might be scheduled to coincide with its release. *Hoxsey* has already put the Food and Drug Administration on the defensive, notes Ausubel, who received a condemnatory letter from the agency which accused the documentary of being biased, uninteresting, and potentially making "victims" of cancer patients who might seek alternative treatment on the basis of the film. The ripple effect will no doubt continue as the story reaches a broader public. To date, two cable programming services and a PBS affiliate have put forth firm offers to air the documentary, and Ausubel is currently working on turning Harry Hoxsey's battle with the medical establishment into a feature-length drama.

PATRICIA THOMSON

INNOVATIVE ART SERIES FOR CHANNEL 4

A new arts series is in the works for Britain's Channel Four, due to premiere the first week in October. As indicated by its working title, *Dancing on the Ceiling*, the 22-part series is not supposed to be a run-of-the-mill arts program—profiling a famous artist, for example, or taping an established dance troupe in performance. "I want to do something different," says Roger Graef, a filmmaker and producer who, in association with the British company Holmes Associates, will produce the show. What that "something different" is has to do with Graef's ideas about the untapped potential of television. "TV is too ephemeral. I want the footprint of this program to last beyond the actual transmissions." To this end, Graef will be looking for work that can in some way act as a catalyst—by bringing about an event or an exhibition, calling attention to a building at risk, having impact on a policy under debate, leading to the commission of new works, etc. By way of illustration, Graef said he could imagine a program based on Los Angeles-based artist Judy Baca's current mile-long mural project. Baca involves local teens and neighborhood gangs in researching the history of ethnic and minority groups in Los Angeles—the mural's subject—and in the painting process. However, she has run out of money. Graef envisions rounding up sponsors who would finance both the completion of her project as well as a mural project in another country.

Graef's definition of the arts covered by the series "is as broad as you can imagine. It's more like 'culture.'" The hour-long shows will each center on a single subject, rather than adopt a magazine format. Graef promises no critics or analysts will appear. He says he wants to reach an audience that normally would not tune into a program on art, and is looking for work that uses "the language of pop videos and commercials, versus a conventional arts documentary style."

Graef will be acquiring films and tapes from both British and international sources. (Contact Roger Graef, c/o Holmes Associates, 10-16 Rathbone St., London W1, England; 011-441-637-8251.) In addition, he is actively pursuing coproduction possibilities. Graef is currently talking with two interested PBS stations and with French and German television personnel. If any coproductions result from these or other possibilities, this would both expand his current overall budget of £2-million and possibly the series length beyond its scheduled 22 weeks.

PT

THE DISCOVERY PROGRAM'S PROGENY

Last January the Discovery Program, which offers movie-making professionals a chance to direct first films, began showcasing its products nearly one year after it was initiated. The five 35mm films, from 22 to 41 minutes long, were directed by Bryan Gordon, Susan Rogers, Robbie Fox, Stephen Tolkin, and Robert Resnikoff—all of whom were screenwriters, with the exception of Resnikoff, a producer. The projects were produced by Jonathan Sanger (*Elephant Man*) and attorney-agent Jana Sue Memel, partners in Chanticleer Films, with financial backing from the Entertainment Business Sector of Coca-Cola and support from Fred Bernstein, president of Columbia Pictures.

The Discovery productions were intended as resumé reels for studios and prospective employers. And, according to Hillary Ripps, associate producer at Chanticleer, they have achieved just that. "We have received nothing but good responses [to the five completed films]," she says. More specifically, Mary Perko, assistant to the producers at Chanticleer, reports that there have already been some 20 offers from studios such as Disney and Columbia. Major crew members are also able to use the shorts as samples.

Chanticleer staffers point out that, although the five films were crewed by top professionals and enacted by experienced performers, each was completed for $35,000 or less. But despite the student-size budgets, the five films have been said to be slick. Some, for instance, were shot by industry pros like Phil Lathrop and John Hora. All received in-kind donations from the likes of Kodak, Panavision, Delux Labs, and Apogee, a special effects outfit. The producers were also able to negotiate student/experimental waivers with the Screen Actors Guild, thus keeping costs down. For future projects, deals with other unions are being worked out.

The subjects of the first batch of Discovery films vary from an exclusive male club, a distance spitting champion, and a marauding jogger to a teenager's escapist yearnings and a fantastic scenario in which people pay for things with portions of their lives. Though the films have been traveling the festival circuit, Ripps says, "I don't know if there's really a market for them." However, one of the films, *Ray's All-Male Dance Hall*, about an exclusive club where powerful executives make deals while dancing with one another, won the Academy Award in the Best Live Action Short Subject category.

Despite questions from some critics about whether all the Hollywood sophistication involved in making the films might have covered up any lack of talent, it seems the results speak for the program's viability. Chanticleer plans to continue the program and has received applications for the four to seven slots opening next year. They expect to select a broader range of industry people while maintaining the budgets for the next batch at about $35,000.

QT

STERNBERG EXITS NYCH

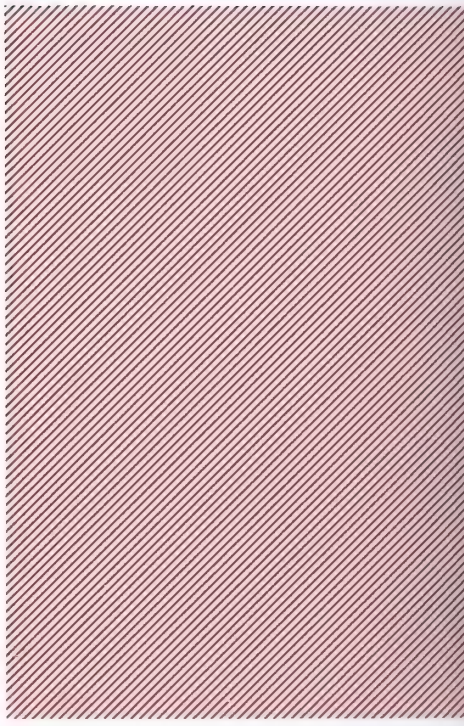
After eight years at the New York Council on the Humanities, senior program officer Janet Sternberg resigned in January. Sternberg had special responsibility for media and literature. Throughout her tenure she was an unwavering advocate of film funding and was instrumental in keeping the proportion of NYCH's public programs budget dedicated to film production at approximately 30 percent. This was a significant gesture of support when NYCH suffered the vagaries of funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, which reduced its allocations to state humanities councils as its own level of funding was cut by Congress in the early eighties.

"NYCH is the little engine that could," says Sternberg, who takes pride in NYCH's "heroic" attempts to make the most of their resources through "strategic funding." "We got good at cutting a little pie into skinny but very nourishing pieces," she states. One such program that Sternberg conceived and directed is Films in the Humanities, which received an NEH Exemplary Award. FIH, now in its second year, combines NYCH's film funding program with a decentralized exhibition concept. It sends NYCH-funded documentaries on the road together with filmmakers and collaborating scholars. Designed to reach broad community audiences, particularly in upstate New York areas, FIH resulted in 90 free public screenings in its first year, as well as in numerous first-time joint presentations between regional institutions and an emerging upstate exhibition network.

Sternberg left NYCH to pursue her own consulting, writing, and production projects. She plans to complete a second volume of her book of commissioned essays, *The Writer on Her Work*, and will be teaching at the New School for Social Research in New York City and at the California Institute of the Arts in southern California.

NYCH's new program officer is Coco Fusco, a freelance writer and curator. Fusco is editor of *Reviewing Histories: Selections from New Latin American Cinema*, and has written on independent media for *The Independent*, *In These Times*, *Cineaste*, *Art in America*, *Afterimage*, and other

THE INDEPENDENT



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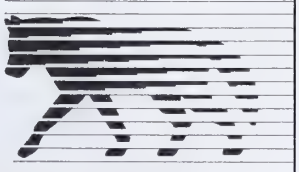
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publications. She recently curated *Young, British, and Black* for Third World Newsreel. At NYCH, Fusco will be involved in a new outreach initiative, Cultural Literacy in a Multicultural Society, among other projects, which aims to expand awareness of NYCH among cultural and community groups to the same degree NYCH has broadened its outreach geographically.

PT

SEQUELS

On May 17, the ninth circuit federal appeals court upheld a 1986 decision that prohibits the **United States Information Agency** from refusing certification that allows exemptions from customs duties for exported educational films ["Border Guards," March 1986 and "Sequels," December 1986]. The lawsuit that occasioned the recent ruling was brought by the Center for Constitutional Rights on behalf of a group of documentary producers whose films had been denied certification and the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers. The court's decision, written by Judge Cecil Poole, deemed the USIA's decisions "content based" and in violation of the First Amendment. In a related action, Judge A. Wallace Tashima, who ruled against the USIA in 1986 and ordered the agency to redraft its guidelines governing eligibility for customs duties waivers, sent the agency back to the drawing board after finding that their new regulations were also unconstitutional.

□ □ □

Ron Hull, director of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's Program Fund for the past six years, announced his resignation on April 26. During his tenure at the Program Fund, Hull oversaw the solidification of CPB funding for the major PBS station consortia series *American Playhouse*, *Frontline*, *WonderWorks*, *The MacNeil/Lehrer Newshour*, *Great Performances*, and, most recently, *The American Experience*. He also was responsible for creation of Open Solicitations, the only national source of public television funding for independent producers outside these station-based series, which remains the only fund within CPB where peer panels are used to review and select productions recommended for funding, with both independents and public television stations and related entities eligible to apply. Originally, Open Solicitations panels included variable numbers of independent producers and station representatives, but in 1984 Hull initiated the practice of setting aside four of the nine panel seats for station employees. Although the annual Open Solicitations budget has remained steady at approximately $6-million since its inception in 1984, CPB's national production funds have increased from $23,290,000 to $34-million in the same period.

In the past year, Hull has witnessed shifts within the CPB bureaucracy that affect the Program Fund's autonomy in relation to the CPB administration. *Current*, the public broadcasting bi-weekly magazine, quotes Hull, "I liked the way the program fund was set up when I took the job.... There was no one in the corporate side of CPB that I reported to in terms of program fund decisions." Hull's resignation occurred shortly after Congress held reauthorization hearings on public broadcasting, where CPB and the Program Fund in particular were vocally criticized by independent producer representatives for neglecting the congressional mandate that CPB allocate "substantial funding" for independent production, stipulated in the 1978 Public Telecommunications Act. *Current* also reports that Hull is returning to Nebraska, where he worked for the Nebraska Educational Network for 27 years. He will be the station manager of KUON-TV at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln.

□ □ □

The same issue of *Current* (May 11, 1988) continues their coverage of the campaign of the **National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers** to reform public television [see our special issue "Public Television: Independents' Challenge," June 1988]. Under the headline "Public Television's Little War," president of MacNeil/Lehrer Productions Al Vecchione lambasts independent producers who testified at the March reauthorization hearings in favor of a National Independent Programming Service, calling them "a vocal if obscure special interest." The Coalition's arguments for NIPS, he maintains, are simply "a smokescreen" meant to obscure the real agenda of these and like-minded independents, "a group of people who are simply seeking employment through the backdoor." A rebuttal to Vecchione follows, written by Coalition co-chairs Lawrence Sapadin and Lawrence Daressa, which outlines a point by point analysis of the myths underlying Vecchione's interpretation of the NIPS proposal and outlines independents' objections to current CPB and PBS funding practices. Last in the series is what may be Ron Hull's final word to the independents who have been banging at his door ever since he went to work at the Program Fund. Hull's main target is independent producer Frederick Wiseman, whose congressional testimony criticizing various Program Fund policies was published in an earlier edition of *Current* [also in the June *Independent*, pp. 34-37].

□ □ □

New York state legislators came through with a significant budget increase for the **New York State Council on the Arts** ["*Post* Prompts NYSCA Inquiry," June 1988]. For fiscal year 1989, NYSCA will be receiving $54,500,000—over $7-million or 15 percent more than was allocated for 1988. However, the budgets for the Film and Media Programs will only increase six

percent. Of the almost $5-million of discretionary funds, $90,000 have been earmarked for the Media Program and $125,000 for Film. While NYCSA's overall budget has increased 35 percent over the past five years, the Film Program's has grown considerably less—only 19 percent, and the Media Program has grown approximately 21 percent over the past four years.

Within the Media Program the added dollars will be used primarily for the Media for the Other Arts program, minority producers, and to support equipment purchases. The Film Program's increase will be spread over a number of areas, including production, institutional support, conferences, new applicants, and multi-year support.

The budget also includes $1.9-million for a new program, initiated by the Governor's Office, designed to locate minority arts organizations across the state and provide funding for institutional stabilization. A request for proposals will be sent out sometime this year.

□ □ □

Mary Esbjornson has taken over as executive director of the New York Media Alliance, following the departure of **Robin White**. **Reginald Woolery**, former distribution manager of the Black Filmmaker Foundation, assumed Esbjornson's job as the organization's membership coordinator. **Crystal King** has replaced Woolery at BFF. Film Forum has hired **Zette Emmons** as assistant to director Karen Cooper. And, in Atlanta, **Anthony Rue**, program director at IMAGE Film/Video Center, departed last January, and **Michele Fleming** is his replacement.

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Corporate Speech, Power Politics, and the First Amendment

Herbert I. Schiller

[Ed.'s note: This article is an excerpt of a chapter entitled "Corporate Speech: Judicial Legitimation of Corporate Information Power," from the author's forthcoming book, Privatized Visions, Spaces, Messages: The Corporate Enclosure of Public Expression. *The book examines the increasing commercialization and privatization of culture, in national and international contexts, as well as the prospects for public expression in light of the current crisis in the U.S. economy. This excerpt concentrates on legal developments affecting interpretations of the First Amendment and the concept of free expression—presently being invoked by businesses like cable television companies—that enhance private corporations' access to new media technologies while limiting or eliminating that of individual members of society. Elsewhere in the chapter, Schiller describes and analyzes the judicial history of corporate speech in the U.S. and several crucial Supreme Court rulings, such as the 1978* Bellotti *decision, which reasserted that corporations are the legal equivalent of individual persons and increased the legal protection of advertising, i.e., corporate speech.]*

In the post-World War II years, the United States economy came to rely on information and information technology. Control over information and the information machinery became matters of basic power relations. It was in this context that corporate speech—business' capability to express commercial, political, and economic views—assumed urgency. Accordingly, judicial accommodation to a new form of property, information, has been updated. In a series of decisions in the 1970s, the Supreme Court accorded broader First Amendment protection to corporate speech, and the corporate sector has used its recently conferred First Amendment rights to transmit its perspectives across the informational-cultural landscape.

Corporate Speech Rights versus Social Accountability

First Amendment rights increasingly have been claimed by corporations, whatever their main economic activity. Corporations in the media field—though not newspaper enterprises, which have always been covered—are particularly intent in securing this privileged status because it exempts them from social accountability and obligation. The cable television industry, for example, which undeniably is in the communication business, has intensified its efforts to be considered a legitimate candidate for First Amendment protection, to be treated no different from the press.

Cable's unqualified free speech rights have been supported by some scholars, one of whom, the late Ithiel De Sola Pool, encapsulated this idea in the title of his book devoted to the subject, *The Technologies of Freedom.* According to Pool and others, the new electronic technologies, of which cable is a prime example, afford greatly expanded opportunities for communication. This broadened capability, in Pool's opinion, eliminates the need for oversight and regulation. He claimed that the more than sufficient number of channels now made possible by cable television technology will guarantee ample diversity. Thus the justification for regulation is obviated, although Pool was willing to concede that it may have been necessary when channel scarcity existed.

Leaving aside the already well-advanced concentration of corporate ownership in the cable industry, where a few companies now account for a sizable part of the national subscribing audience, the fact that cable television indirectly utilizes a public resource, the radio spectrum, does not impress the advocates of cable's constitutional rights. Thus, cable TV companies have been challenging—on First Amendment grounds—the authority of municipal governments to grant exclusive franchises for cable delivery as well as the requirements that cable companies pay franchise taxes, wire poor neighborhoods as well as rich ones, and set aside channels for public access.[1] It is these social commitments that the cable industry seeks to avoid by claiming First Amendment free speech rights.

Obliging the cable franchise-holder to make public access channels available is an especially illuminating issue in so far as freedom of speech is concerned. The cable industry argues that its freedom of speech is denied by local laws that insist public access channels be made available. In fact, if access channels are unavailable, the local community is the victim, foregoing one of its few means of public expression. One legal commentator explains the significance of public access channels:

> The time has come to update the public forum to the television age...television has become America's primary media language. Use of the streets and parks for expression without the assistance of telecommunications facilities is only partially effective and does not adequately serve the goals of the First Amendment. If society is to attain those goals through television, it cannot rely solely on the commercial media. Rather, channels should be opened for public use: the screen must become the modern town square...a general right of affirmative citizen access to cable television has become a practical and constitutional necessity.[2]

To the extent that the cable industry's efforts to put its First Amendment rights—if it is accorded them—above the genuine freedom of speech of the community, the benefits of the "wired city" will never materialize. More appropriate, then, will be the designation, the "barbed wire" city, a place that limits, or excludes entirely, public expression.

This is the standard corporate prescription for all social problems: assign responsibility to individuals and families to meet the social disorders produced largely by out-of-control corporate enterprise.

Corporate Speech in the Future

Expanded corporate speech doctrine and practice cannot be regarded as completed and irreversible developments. Having come into existence only in the last 25 years—and still evolving—judicial accordance of First Amendment rights to corporate expression has paralleled the growing role of information in the economy and, especially, its vital importance to corporate business. Yet the structural changes in the economy that have facilitated the substantial growth of corporate speech in recent years have produced another dynamic as well—one which could serve to slow down, and possibly reverse, the corporate speech express. This is widespread popular opposition to saturated exposure to the corporate message. Already apparent in some instances in the domestic sphere, the opposition is no less evident in the international arena.

The forces that have prompted United States economic, military, and cultural expansion in the post-World War II years began to be exhausted in the early 1970s. Since that time, the American international economic position has weakened markedly, and countervailing pressures on U.S. power have emerged. U.S. policy efforts to apply, in effect, the First Amendment's free speech provisions to the global activities of U.S. media companies have become less and less effective. To be sure, the First Amendment is without standing in international affairs, but it has been invoked all the same—at least in a public relations manner—to challenge foreign national measures that limit the profitable overseas operations of American media corporations, e.g., import quotas on films and television programs, regulation of foreign advertising, and subsidies to domestic cultural/informational productions. This self-serving policy has met growing skepticism and increasing rejection beyond our borders.

Realistically, the application of the doctrine of corporate speech to the international economy is dependent solely on the power that the United States wields in global affairs. The doctrine has no intrinsic value as a universal principle, however strongly the corporate-government leadership extols it. If, and as, U.S. power diminishes, corporate speech exercised internationally must rely on the strength of the enterprise expressing itself. U.S. power will be incapable of sustaining it.

This does not necessarily foretell the twilight of corporate expression in the international economy in the immediate time ahead. As long as the world system continues to be driven by transnational enterprise, as is currently the situation, corporate speech—and especially advertising—will remain an integral part of the system. In fact, the worldwide expansion of advertising continues to be a significant feature of the current period.

At home, the future of corporate speech is no less bound up with the destiny of the economy and how it reacts to the multiple crises affecting it. The consumer society, which promotes and depends on continually higher personal levels of consumption, appeared in its mature state after World War II. With this phenomenon came also a great expansion in general education, and with it the growth of a large professional class.

Today, standing on the threshold of the twenty-first century, the consumer society is supported by the purchasing power of millions of professionals, supplemented with staggering infusions of personal credit, extolled and driven forward by torrents of advertising across all media. Nevertheless, it is a sign of the vulnerability and fragility of this economy that its legitimating and central ideological force—advertising—is itself the focus of growing, although still limited, dissatisfaction. The implications of this kind of general disaffection for corporate speech are immense.

While enjoying a high material standard of living and working under strain to maintain and extend it, tens of millions of people experience deep concerns and growing anxiety over the quality of life that is inextricably connected to the consumer economy. In this context, the life-line of the consumer economy, advertising/commercial speech, is being singled out for criticism. The charges are not yet so broad and inclusive that the image-producing industry is seriously threatened. Nor, for now, can this criticism upset the equilibrium of the overall system. However, given the centrality of marketing to the consumer society, even the stirrings of public dissatisfaction take on significance.

To the extent that the cable industry's efforts to put its First Amendment rights—if it is accorded them—above the genuine freedom of speech of the community, the benefits of the "wired city" will never materialize. More appropriate, then, will be the designation, the "barbed wire" city, a place that limits, or excludes entirely, public expression.

For example, children's TV and the advertising that constitute an inseparable part of it are periodically castigated. A commentary in a business publication, no voice of extremism, decries the "deteriorating quality of children's [TV] shows in recent years and suggests that government intervention is required."[3] Indeed, the mindless content of most children's programming and the volume of hucksterism foisted on young viewers arouse widespread indignation despite assurances from TV executives. The customary corporate response to parental protest is to throw the ball back into the family court, insisting that it is parents' responsibility to monitor and direct their childrens' viewing. This is the standard corporate prescription for all social problems: assign responsibility to individuals and families to meet the social disorders produced largely by out-of-control corporate enterprise.

Tobacco Advertising: Achilles' Heel of Corporate Speech?

A more recent challenge to advertising, and one with the potential for recasting the entire issue of corporate speech rights, has been the so far unsuccessful effort to ban totally tobacco advertising. This is no inconsequential economic matter. In 1986 tobacco companies spent almost three billion dollars on advertising and promotion.[4] The campaign has received strong support from the medical and legal professions, although a proposal to ban was rejected by the American Bar Association in early 1987. Predictably, "opponents of the proposal [to ban—the tobacco industry, newspaper and magazine publishers, and some civil libertarians] said an advertising ban would violate the First Amendment's guarantee of free speech."[5]

For the time being, corporate speech—in this instance promoting a product that has been scientifically certified to be a serious health hazard—continues to receive some constitutional sanction. But it is also evident that this is an issue that has not been finally settled and could extend easily to the general question of corporate speech rights and their legitimacy. At the very minimum, the impact of tobacco advertising may be stoking the fire for a much more sustained attack on corporate speech, internationally as well as domestically.

This has much to do with the groups to whom recent tobacco advertising is directed. In the United States, while the sales of cigarettes to the professional and middle classes decline, the tobacco industry pursues a vigorous campaign to target less well-protected groups to compensate for these lost revenues. "Tobacco companies," it is reported, "are spending more money to induce blacks to buy their product at a time when the industry is under continued attack..."[6] Cigarette ads on billboards in black neighborhoods proliferate. Black publications are filled with cigarette promotions. The situation abroad is strikingly similar. A former chair of the Federal

Six months after approving it, the Florida legislature voted to repeal the state's tax on advertising and professional services. The chairman of the Florida House's Appropriations Committee summed up the legislature's encounter with the corporate speech lobby: "Maybe we should just admit we've been beaten to our knees by Wall Street and Madison Ave."

Trade Commission ruefully observes: "In the unhappy Third World, toward which the cigarette companies have directed the full force of their advertising prowess, and where cigarette ads dominate the media, the amount of cigarette smoking is rapidly increasing."[7]

How long will life-threatening corporate speech be tolerated and actually defended as an individual, constitutional right? Only as long as the beneficiaries of this kind of expression—the corporate advertisers and the media in which they place their messages—retain sufficient national support for their activities. In the meantime, the tobacco companies and the advertising industry in general undertake a many-sided effort to persuade the public that freedom is endangered if their promotions are restricted.

The Philip Morris Company, for example, a giant multinational tobacco firm which also manufactures other consumer goods, utilized academic and literary publications to announce an essay contest it was sponsoring in 1987. "Is Liberty Worth Writing For?" its ad inquires. Directly beneath this headline, the First Amendment is reprinted. The ad states further:

> The First Amendment has been a preoccupation of writers and scholars, journalists and politicians for the last 200 years. It has also drawn the grateful attention of business leaders because it promised that the flow of information about legally sold goods and services would not be infringed upon by government.
>
> The men and women of Philip Morris believe in the principles set forth in the First Amendment and rise to defend its long-standing application to American business. We believe that a tobacco advertising ban, currently under consideration in Congress, is a clear infringement of free expression in a free market economy.

In this pronouncement, it is noteworthy that a multi-billion dollar corporation personalizes itself as "the men and women of Philip Morris." A more accurate description would have been "the Chief Executive Officer and the major shareholders of Philip Morris."

The instructions for the essay contestants list these requirements:

> To write an essay of 2500 words or less that explores and questions censorship of expression, in any sector of American life; that defines and defends the First Amendment's application to American business and that specifically questions the ramifications of a tobacco advertising ban on the future of free expression in a free market economy.[8]

Sponsoring an essay contest on the desirability of corporate speech may be viewed as taking the high road in persuading the public that smoking ads are a part of the heritage of freedom. Philip Morris travels the low road as well. In pursuit of its First Amendment freedom to advertise a carcinogenic product and forestall a congressional bill that would ban all tobacco advertising, the company mailed out to hundreds of newspaper editors and media executives copies of *Pravda*, the Soviet newspaper. Superimposed on the page was this commentary: "Pravda does not carry cigarette advertising, or indeed any advertising. Government control of information is typical of totalitarian regimes and dictatorships."[9] Once again, a familiar tactic is employed—to label any effort to safeguard the public interest against potentially injurious corporate practice as communist. Further along the low road, Philip Morris was discovered to have secretly financed anti-smoking ban ads that were ostensibly paid for by a union. "Full-page newspaper advertisements [on September 22, 1987] that opposed a proposed smoking ban on the Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North, were signed by a transit union president, but secretly paid for by Philip Morris."[10]

Corporate Speech versus the Sovereign State of Florida

Marketing tobacco products is not the only activity in which corporate advertising has become a national issue. In Florida, a state tax on services, which included advertising, was passed by the legislature and scheduled to take effect in mid-1987. It quickly encountered a storm of objection from advertising, consumer goods corporations, and media interests. Especially worried that this kind of a tax could set a precedent for laws enacted in other states, the vice-president for advertising at Proctor and Gamble, the world's largest advertiser (an estimated $1.3-billion in 1986), stated, "If Florida becomes a precedent...it would cost the company between $50 [and] $100 million annually."[11] In defense of their profits, corporate sponsors, advertisers, and the media undertook a campaign of threats, denunciation, and actions against the Florida tax. This included a boycott of Florida for conventions, blacked-out programming from Floridian TV screens, and general media vituperation against the tax. All of this proceeded under the argument that the tax "is a violation of First Amendment guarantees of speech."[12]

If nothing else, the concerted corporate opposition to the tax convincingly demonstrated whose was the loudest voice in the State. The original popular support for the tax was wiped out, "...apparently due, in part, to a ferocious anti-tax campaign by national advertising groups and others. Most of the state's major media outlets, which suffered ad-revenue losses because of the tax, have campaigned editorially against it...nearly a dozen consumer-products companies withdrew ads from Florida media."[13]

Six months after approving it, the Florida legislature voted to repeal the state's tax on advertising and professional services. The chairman of the Florida House's Appropriations Committee summed up the legislature's encounter with the corporate speech lobby: "Maybe we should just admit we've been beaten to our knees by Wall Street and Madison Ave."[14]

The National Security State versus Corporate Speech Rights

The excesses of corporate advertising and the unwillingness of the advertising and media industries to accept any social accountability are producing public reactions, admittedly still weak, that eventually could be an obstacle

The excesses of corporate advertising and the unwillingness of the advertising and media industries to accept any social accountability are producing public reactions, admittedly still weak, that eventually could be an obstacle to the remarkable advances achieved for corporate speech in recent decades.

to the remarkable advances achieved for corporate speech in recent decades. More problematic, but no less significant, the reining in of commercial speech could come from another direction as well in the time ahead.

Suggestive was a Supreme Court decision in 1986. In a closely divided decision (5-4), the Court ruled that the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico was entitled to restrict local advertising of casino gambling, though it allowed the same advertising to be published/broadcast outside the state, on the U.S. mainland.[15] The rationale of the Court seemed to be that it was permissible to attract outsiders, specifically mainland U.S. residents, to Puerto Rico's casinos, but it was also within the purview of Puerto Rican state power to deny that opportunity to Puerto Ricans. In dissent, Justice William J. Brennan charged the majority of the Court with "dramatically shrinking the scope of the First Amendment protection available to commercial speech, and giving government officials unprecedented authority to eviscerate constitutionally protected expression."[16]

Advertising Age, a trade journal of the industry, understandably was deeply troubled by the ruling. It quoted a Washington lawyer who said, "There are two recurring themes in Rehnquist's votes; one is that corporations have no First Amendment rights. The second is that commercial speech is unprotected and ought to be. He would go back to the 1930s and '40s when any advertising could be banned."[17] Indeed, why would a deeply conservative justice rule against the interests of the corporate sector in fundamental matters that affect profits, systemic ideology, and economic stability, in favor of state regulatory power?

The only answer that remotely makes sense is that, at least to some conservative minds, state power provides the sole means of dealing with perceived pervasive social malaise—crime, drug usage, illegal immigration, "terrorism," and social dissatisfaction in general (which is typically called "subversion"). The increasingly troubled American society strongly suggests that this line of reasoning, supportive of State power, may be invoked to uphold a disturbingly large range of repressive acts by the state.

The perspective of the right-wing Heritage Foundation is not without relevance here. In the report it prepared for the guidance of the newly-elected Reagan administration in 1980, heavy emphasis is placed on "the reality of subversion." "It is axiomatic," the study noted, "that individual liberties are secondary to the requirement of national security and internal civil order."[18] Less pointedly and more specifically, Robert Sherrill writes, "[Rehnquist] may be on the right side for the wrong reasons: perhaps he does not abhor corporations (the right reason) so much as he loves the state too much."[19] Turning to the other side of the argument, the defense of advertising as protected commercial speech—Justice Brennan's view—fortifies and further promotes the awesome aggregation of private power, along with its capability of drowning out alternative views and outlooks.

In either case, we are left with a wrenching set of alternatives. Either to accept—and defend—a further extension of already pervasive corporate expression or to insist on state restraint of that private capability and thereby contribute to the danger that such restraint may bring with it, the possibility of excessive and arbitrary state power. Perhaps in a period in which the shocks of rapid techno-social change, propelled almost exclusively by market forces, are tearing apart the social fabric and buffeting individuals unmercifully it is too much to expect to find neat alternatives and orderly arrays of social choices. The dilemma inherent in this particular choice—between private corporate and state power—can only be resolved as a political issue.

Important and powerful as private capital and the State are, there is a third, potentially more decisive force. It has been called "people power." It is the American people, ultimately, who will have to decide. If, in fact, the people's will and awareness—an enormous "if"—are brought to bear on the political process, the bridling of corporate speech need not be the first step toward the abridgement of individual rights and liberties. Actually, these rights and liberties could be expanded as corporate power is forced to retreat. These are not easily realized expectations. They depend on developing the political consciousness, which, in turn, minimally requires a new dimension of media access for those who are now systematically excluded.

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Do sufficient human resources still exist for this to occur? In any case, the stakes far exceed the future of corporate speech.

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12. Jon Nordheimer, "Ad Tax Defended by Florida Officials," the *New York Times*, June 22, 1987.
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Girl Crazy

Lesbian Narratives in She Must Be Seeing Things *and* Damned If You Don't



In the final scene of Su Friedrich's *Damned If You Don't*, the nun sheds her habit, with the help of her seductive neighbor.

Courtesy filmmaker

Martha Gever

This article is based on a paper delivered at the College Art Association's 1988 annual conference last February at a panel entitled "Discussing the Other, Possessing the Outsider." It was revised for a panel on "The Visual Construction of Sexual Difference," held in conjunction with "Sexism, Colonialism, Misrepresentation: A Corrective Film Series," sponsored by the Collective for Living Cinema in April and May 1988.

Because this text was conceived as a discussion of two particular films, information about other works by the filmmakers was omitted in the spoken versions and is difficult to integrate after the fact. Nevertheless, a sketch of their backgrounds in filmmaking seems relevant in The Independent. *Su Friedrich's films were recently screened in a retrospective at the Whitney Museum of American Art. They range from her 1979 short film* Cool Hands, Warm Heart, *which symbolically renders rituals and interactions related to women's subordination and rebellion against it, to* The Ties That Bind, *which combines her mother's recollections about growing up in Nazi Germany with her own responses to this material.*

Sheila McLaughlin began making films while living in London in the early seventies. In collaboration with Lynne Tillman, she co-wrote, directed, produced, and played the lead in Committed *(1984), a narrative film based on the life of nonconformist and politically active actress Frances Farmer, who confronted but eventually was defeated by anti-Communist hysteria and the repressive psychiatric establishment of the late-forties. McLaughlin has also acted in a number of films, including several by West German filmmakers.*

□ □ □

I wouldn't care at all about Tama Janowitz if copies of her latest novel weren't stacked in prominent promotional piles at the front of my local book store, but since they are, since she has been hailed as the punk Jane Austen,[1] the bohemian voice of the eighties, and since I live where I do—New York City—I want to point out how, in the much-hyped *Slaves of New York*, she characterizes lesbians. Her sole lesbian appears late in the book, as an object of derision in a chapter entitled "Ode to a Heroine of the Future." The "heroine" in question is the sister of the male narrator. About a third of the way into the chapter, this woman, whose name is Amaretta, asks, "By the way, did I tell you of my lesbian experience?" The question is addressed to the occupants of a table at a hip downtown bar, a bunch of drug dealers and musicians along with the artist-brother. The longish anecdote that follows is told for their entertainment as well as, presumably, that of the reader. Briefly, the "lesbian experience" Amaretta relates begins in a lesbian bar in a small town, populated by "not the choicest group of lesbians," most with short hair, dressed in men's clothing, with hard features, who eye her with crude sexual interest. She picks up a woman described as a classic bull dyke, goes home with her, and, after undressing this unwomanly woman, who is unaccustomed to being touched, suddenly burns her with a cigarette and flees. By accident, the next day she meets the pathetic old dyke, who meekly forgives her and continues to pursue her. End of story; her audience is greatly amused. The next day, the reader is informed, Amaretta jumped from a seventh floor window.

The significance of this vicious bit of fiction should not be overstated, since Janowitz' book as a whole indulges in the same sort of lurid exotica as a substitute for social acuity. But it stands as an example of the still operative concept of lesbian deviance: a sordid, humorless, depressing, grotesque, sexually inadequate condition that results from pathological

Top: Friedrich introduces her story of a nun's erotic attraction with a fragmented synopsis of the 1946 melodrama *Black Narcissus*, which pits a "bad nun" against a "good nun."

Bottom: Signalling her interest in the nun, the secular woman stitches a tapestry depicting the Passion of Christ.

Both photos courtesy filmmaker





gender reversal—or inversion, as it was called in the sexological literature of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Despite the campaigns for gay rights and against such prejudices that date back to the last decade of the last century, butch lesbians and effeminate gay men still function uncritically as cultural freaks. In cinema, the equivalent of Janowitz' miserable lesbian is Sister George. And even Nola Darling, the sexually liberated protagonist in Spike Lee's celebrated and popular *She's Gotta Have It*, has to fend off the advances of a lascivious but unappealing lesbian reminiscent of the predatory Countess Geschwitz in *Pandora's Box*. Some see a corrective to such representations in Donna Deitch's *Desert Hearts*. But, as Mandy Merck has pointed out, this movie and another contemporary lesbian romance, John Sayles' *Lianna*, faithfully repeat conventions of "art" cinema that use "the figure of the woman to signify sexual pleasure, sexual problems, sex itself" and thus hardly depart from gendered codes so dear and central to patriarchal institutions.[2]

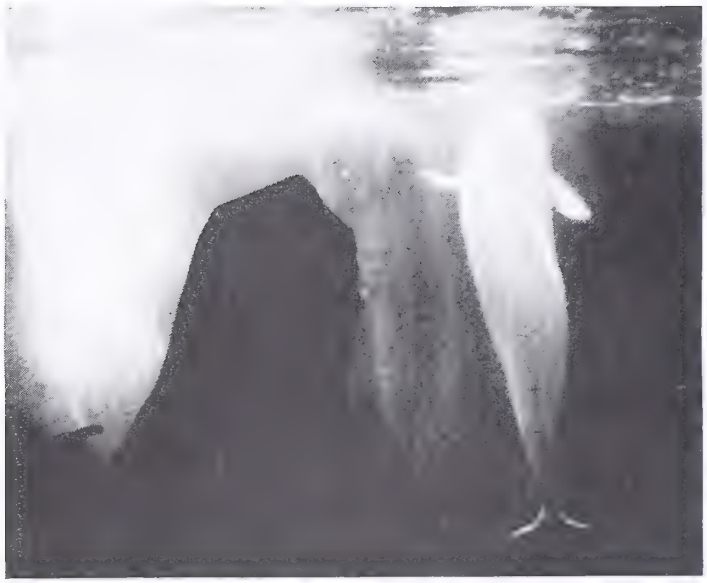
Although there is much to say about lesbians portrayed as deviants in relation to dominant heterosexual standards invented to enforce so-called normal female sexuality, this line of thought leads to an analysis that, at best, can only produce a commentary on the limits of masculine and feminine sexual identities. It's easy to cite myriad instances of how lesbians figure as negative elements in standard dramatizations of heterosexual romance or, in the more progressive works, as replications of well-worn complementary, active/passive couplings that underlie the ideology of masculine dominance. However, the purpose in sketching the outline of the enduring viability of lesbian caricatures in our culture is meant to establish a contrast and serve as a reminder of how homophobic dread saturates the narratives produced by the entertainment industry—literature as well as cinema—and by presumably more independent artists like Lee and Janowitz.

Neither Su Friedrich's *Damned If You Don't* nor Sheila McLaughlin's *She Must Be Seeing Things* requires a defense against homophobia, or misogyny for that matter. Still, that doesn't preclude questions of gender, since these inevitably arise in both films and in the minds of spectators. The complications of gender in lesbian narratives can be summarized as one broad question: What happens when socially designated sexual outlaws play with the codes of femininity and masculinity—and with the sexual tensions associated with these—as participants in a subculture that, partially, defines itself in opposition to straight norms and their hierarchies of masculinity and femininity?

Both *Damned If You Don't* (1987) and *She Must Be Seeing Things* (1987) provide plentiful material for such an analysis and exhibit a number of overlapping interests, because—apart from their almost coincidental production within the New York City independent filmmaking scene—both exceed the analyses in much academic critical and theoretical work concerning sexual difference, narrative structures, voyeurism, cinema, and problems of representation in general. Without digressing into a lengthy explanation of the last decade and a half of debates about women and film,[3] it should be noted that the most important and most influential developments in this area can be attributed to writers and filmmakers who apply psychoanalytic, semiotic, and deconstructive theoretical frameworks and methods, sometimes in conjunction with socialist or Marxist critiques.[4] Despite the value of some of these contributions to feminist cultural criticism, very little has been written about the complications posed by lesbian sexuality and/or lesbian psychology, not to mention lesbian identities, histories, and social experiences, in relation to film. Indeed, much of this work takes heterosexual, binary (masculine/feminine) sexual identity for granted, problematized surely, but fundamental nevertheless.[5]

Both films also contribute to debates about sexuality current among lesbians in Western culture outside academic contexts, that is, the highly politicized arguments about erotic fantasies, butch and femme roles, and variations of lesbian sexual practices that have taken place in feminist and lesbian forums, including the pages of the political feminist Washington, D.C.-based monthly newspaper *Off Our Backs* and its libertarian counterpart *On Our Backs*, a magazine that bills itself as "entertainment for the adventurous lesbian," published in San Francisco. Departing from the popular lesbian-feminist positions of the early-to-mid-seventies that proposed lesbian relationships as a utopian alternative to the oppressive sexual politics of patriarchy, these films acknowledge sexual desires that are in no way free from fantasies of seduction and possession but at the same time refuse to reduce such fantasies to easy dichotomies of male subjects and female objects. And, whereas Friedrich introduces a male character in order to exile him from her story, McLaughlin dramatizes what she has called "the ultimate lesbian horror, the fantasy of having sex with a man."[6]

In this comment, McLaughlin hints at her interest in reversals and complications of traditional realist narrative film conventions, where the possibility of sexual attraction between women—or between men—functions as the ultimate horror for a heterosexual romantic imagination. The reference to standard cinematic romance is also important in Friedrich's





During a visit to the aquarium at Coney Island, the nun contemplates the sensuous movements of a porpoise living in captivity.

Upon her return to the convent, the nun discovers the tapestry, which her neighbor hung in her room in her absence.

Both photos courtesy filmmaker

shorter and less realist film. *Damned If You Don't* begins with an eight-minute rephotographed condensation of Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger's 1946 film *Black Narcissus*, replayed as a TV movie watched by a nameless female character (Ela Troyano). Excerpts of the film on the TV screen, often shot as fragments of the full frame, are cut together to illustrate the words of an off-screen woman's voice. Speaking in English with a foreign accent, this narrator tells what could be called the film's repressed story—the story of passionate relationships between women within the film's male-centered narrative—by concentrating on the key moments in the rivalry between two female characters, a "good nun" and a "bad nun" assigned to a convent in India. The nuns' difficulties surviving in what is portrayed as an exotic but dangerous environment are both ameliorated and intensified by the presence of the secular, sexy Mr. Dean, who turns out to be the bad nun's fatal attraction.

The rest of *Damned If You Don't* plots an intrigue between the same woman who is the audience for *Black Narcissus* and a nun (Peggy Healy) who lives in a nearby convent in Manhattan's Lower East Side. The soundtrack intermixes readings from *Immodest Acts*, the biography of a seventeenth-century Italian lesbian abbess,[7] and a conversation between Friedrich and a high school friend who recalls the influence of nun-schoolteachers on her early awareness of sexuality. Shots of the nun fretting over her attraction to her sensual neighbor, whose deliberate interest obviously upsets her, alternate with documentary footage of nuns in prosaic public places, jumpy shots of landscapes and ecclesiastical buildings, and more static images of various animals living in captivity—reptiles, fish, and fowl—whose graceful movements are constrained by glass walls or iron fences. While the nun pays a visit to the porpoises in the aquarium at Coney Island, the other woman stitches in the eyes and mouth of a tapestry pattern depicting the Passion of Christ, which then appears on the wall of the nun's convent room. That does it. The good/bad nun goes directly to her seducer's room, and they make love. That is the film's finale. Contrary to *Black Narcissus*, where the bad nun falls from a high cliff to her death during a struggle with her rival, this nun's recognition of sexual attraction and its enactment is not punished.

Curiously, *She Must Be Seeing Things* also incorporates a convent theme. For some contemporary lesbians, the image of the cloister has functioned as a metaphor for an idyllic female community, remote from the domain of male rule, but both Friedrich and McLaughlin fashion it as a prison. McLaughlin incorporates the Thomas de Quincy story of Catalina De Erauso, a seventeenth-century escapee from a convent, as a film-within-the-film, a filmmaking project undertaken by the character Jo (Lois Weaver). Snippets of her work-in-progress periodically occupy the screen, sometimes folded into narrative sequences of Jo at work, sometimes as daydreams. Since these fragments are never introduced by any of the familiar devices for signaling shifts between mental states—out-of-focus transitions, say, or tinted film—the historical disparity between the downtown Manhattan settings populated by contemporary characters whose lives provide the film's narrative and this mysterious, discontinuous costume drama heightens the irreality of the more naturalistic scenes.

Even within the film's main narrative of Agatha's (Sheila Dabney) suspicion of Jo's sexual infidelity with a variety of men, uncertainty about reality abounds. In the first scenes of the film, Jo engages in a flirtation with a man while attending an out-of-town screening of one of her films, establishing the credibility of Agatha's jealousy. Meanwhile Agatha discovers an old diary of Jo's, illustrated with photos of past male lovers. As the film continues, the overlap between "real life" and fantasy becomes increasingly evident, even as Agatha appears to move closer to a confrontation with Jo, whether justified or not, whether actual or not.

Like the nun and her neighbor in *Damned If You Don't*, each of the two main characters in *She Must Be Seeing Things*, then, is driven by desires—the things she *wants* to see—which take shape for Jo in her fantastic film while Agatha compulsively pursues her paranoid fantasies. From time to time, they meet as lovers, where the shared penchant for fantasy intensifies the sexual play between them. The enjoyment these two women find in their sexual encounters is central to the film, as is the difference between their sexual personalities, a recognition of each other's difference perhaps, but not a confirmation of immutable identities that allow one subjectivity at the expense of the other. For instance, Agatha's gift to Jo of a satiny piece of lingerie is a definite butch gesture. And Jo's campy, femme, teasing performance for Agatha in response provides the seductive come-on that lands them in bed, making love without the soft lighting and syrupy music of so-called "sensitive" lesbian sex à la *Lianna*, but with plenty of passion and some humor as well—and with Jo on top.

Here and elsewhere in the film, McLaughlin doesn't shy away from the difficult terrain that I alluded to earlier—the landscape of gendered symbolism that brings lesbian sexuality into relation with the social categories of male and female. So when, at the height of her anxiety about Jo's promiscuity, Agatha dresses in a traditional male uniform of suit and tie and slicks

Top right: Jo flirts witha man (Ed Bowes) she meets at an out-of-town screening in the opening sequence of *She Must Be Seeing Things*.

Photo:Chris Boas

Bottom right: While Jo is away on business, Agatha discovers and reads a diary she finds while straightening the bookshelves in Jo's apartment.

Photo: Anita Bartsch



back her hair, this impersonation of a man may be taken as a confirmation of her male identification—a typical "mannish lesbian." But this view is myopic, determined by rigid gender conventions, and would necessarily consign her lover to a stock feminine role. Certainly, Jo sometimes wears skirts, heels, and make-up, whereas Agatha usually wears tailored shirts, trousers, no lipstick or nail polish. But as the film proceeds both characters act in ways that contradict strict femininity or masculinity.

While Agatha becomes increasingly obsessed with fantasies and hallucinations, Jo demonstrates her self-confidence and competence as a film director—most notably in the scene where she confers with a member of her crew while Agatha spies on her wearing the masculine disguise, a gesture that underlines the cultural connotations of masculinity, dressed, as she is, in the power-suit. As McLaughlin has indicated, by such means Agatha may hope to defeat her imagined male rivals by taking on their appearance.[8] Similarly, in Jo's movie Catalina De Erauso assumes men's clothing after running away from the convent, as a disguise and as a means to achieve the greater freedom allowed men. Most important in a *lesbian* narrative, though, symbols associated with sexual power carry *erotic* meanings not limited to maleness, annexing erotic power and even aggression for women in forms that, while perhaps disconcerting, are pleasurable, not malicious as in Janowitz' story.

There is yet another kind of social difference operating in *She Must Be Seeing Things* which, I think, is more idealistic and more problematic for the film than the variability and instability of sexual identities. Agatha is Black, a lawyer from a middle-class, Catholic, Brazilian family, whereas Jo is a WASP, North American artist. And, although the legacy of Agatha's Catholic upbringing and her identification with her father—also a lawyer—partially accounts for the course of her actions, the racial and cultural differences that the two women embody remain understated in the film. At one point, when Agatha confides in her co-worker and friend Julia about her doubts about Jo's fidelity, Julia voices a warning about relationships with women who have long histories of sexual involvement with men. What's odd here is that Julia, who is also Black, doesn't mention the potential



difficulties of relationships with white women, no matter what their sexual past. Instead, Agatha and Jo are assumed to inhabit a shared culture, which constitutes a utopia in light of the fact of racial inequity in U.S. society. Since much of the film avoids neat resolutions of conflict and contradiction—upsetting utopian impulses—the downplaying of the power relations entailed in racial differences seems simplistic in a work that deals so well with such dynamics in sexual terms.

But, counter to familiar cinematic caricatures, Jo and Agatha do not represent an opposition of white humanity versus black mystery and exoticism, or black abjection opposed to white triumph. Nor do they represent absolute opposites. Agatha's fastidious habits and her self-control are never presented as emotional limitations. Likewise, Jo's often irrational and impetuous behavior does not impede her ability to work or think seriously. And, as lovers, both women appear vulnerable as well as strong.

The vehicle for the characters' erotic entanglements in McLaughlin's film as well as in Friedrich's is the activity of pursuit—following, spying upon, putting herself in the path of the one desired. Friedrich's scant, but nevertheless distinct, narrative consists almost entirely of such moves by the seductive neighbor, followed by shots of the evasive, nervous nun. In a scene that counterpoints Agatha's donning of a mannish outfit in *She Must Be Seeing Things*—at the moment when the nun appears most perturbed by temptations of carnal pleasure—the neighbor puts on a revealing, super-femme dress before sallying out to the corner grocery, where she once again surprises the nun. The absence of sync sound in the film is taken to an extreme in this and other scenes of their various meetings, which occur without either character ever saying a word. Friedrich, however, cannot be judged adverse to language but, instead, intent on representing an "unspeakable" sexual attraction,[9] a project of producing psychological meaning through the organization of sensual and cognitive cinematic elements, signalled by the reworking of *Black Narcissus* at the outset.

McLaughlin, too, engages with the tricky problems of voyeurism, exploiting the complicity of the camera. Vicariously partaking in the detective role, the audience watches over Agatha's shoulder as she pours over Jo's diaries, witnesses her hallucinations of Jo's rendez-vous with male lovers, and shares her B-movie style fantasies of Jo's violent murder. But she is continually frustrated by her mistaken visions, and the diaries never yield the required clues. Having been enticed into participating in Agatha's psychic insecurity, the audience also faces the contradictions that Jo's separate subjectivity poses. Agatha's doubts and fears eventually become divorced from the need to find justification in objective, impersonal "truth," and her paranoia appears to defuse as she watches Jo direct a scene that enacts the thrilling dangers of both voyeurism and sexual desire: Catalina surreptitiously spies on a woman and man making love; a jealous husband intrudes and attacks the man with a knife while Catalina runs off with the woman. Agatha's understanding of the irrational factors that inform her emotional reality—and Jo's surprising dramatization of a fantasy along the same lines—assumes an importance typically represented in narrative







Top: A blind man (Charles Ludlam) is led by a young boy in a scene from Jo's film based on the story of Catalina De Erauso.

Photo: Chris Boas

Middle: Agatha spies on Jo's meeting with a member of her film crew.

Courtesy filmmaker

Bottom: Catalina peers from her hiding place as she watches the scene of adulterous lovemaking, which concludes with Catalina's rescue of the woman when her murderous husband intrudes.

Photo: Anita Bartsch

cinema by the detective-hero's rational restoration of social order. This refusal of conventional cultural integration is powerfully played at the film's end, when Jo shows Agatha a freshly edited piece of her movie—the rescue scene just described—without indicating the full context of this scene or its narrative function.

The variety of erotic projections elaborated in *She Must Be Seeing Things* and Friedrich's restaging of the *Black Narcissus* story as a seduction scenario, make it possible to articulate the dynamics of voyeurism and its inflections in lesbian terms. After seeing *Damned If You Don't* with several friends, I found myself doing just that. Leaving the theater, we became involved in an animated discussion about the final scene, where the sexy, secular woman carefully removes the intricate layers of the nun's habit. One friend was irritated, because she saw this as a repetition of male fantasies about possessing a virgin. Without much thought, I blurted out my interpretation: "When she took off that head band, I saw her as a dyke disguised as a nun."

NOTES

1. The back cover of *Slaves of New York* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1987) quotes a *Newsday* review: "Jane Austen goes punk... Welcome to bohemia, circa now."
2. Mandy Merck, "Dessert Hearts," the *Independent*, July 1987, pp. 15-17.
3. B. Ruby Rich's comment at a conference in 1986 comes to mind. She noted that feminist conferences and publications in the seventies often addressed "women and film," but, by the mid-eighties, the topic had been transformed into "gender and visual representation," the title of the event at which she made this remark. The phenomenon Rich cited historically coincided with the increasing respectability of feminism in academic film studies courses and the institutionalization of what has become known as "feminist film theory."
4. A number of feminist film critics and theorists have contributed to the growing literature on sexual difference. The benchmark for many who work in this vein is Laura Mulvey's 1975 essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," which employs psychoanalytic concepts to trace the operations of masculine desire in Hollywood narrative films. Two other central examples are textbooks published in the early eighties, Annette Kuhn's *Women's Pictures: Feminism and Cinema* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982) and E. Ann Kaplan's *Women and Film: Both Sides of the Camera* (New York: Methuen, 1983), which likewise rely on Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalytic theories in their analyses of work by women filmmakers.
5. See Mandy Merck, "Difference and Its Discontents," *Screen*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (Winter 1987), pp. 2-9.
6. Alison Butler, "She Must Be Seeing Things: An Interview with Sheila McLaughlin," *Screen*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (Autumn 1987), p. 22.
7. Judith C. Brown, *Immodest Acts: The Life of a Lesbian Nun in Renaissance Italy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).
8. Butler, p. 23.
9. Gay/lesbian sex has been known euphemistically as "the love that has no name." The representation of "unspeakable" acts still shock audiences, as I was reminded at a recent screening of Sankofa's *The Passion of Remembrance* in New York City, where a man loudly exclaimed, "Oh, no!" at the moment when two men kissed on screen.

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CANDID CAMERA: THE FESTIVAL OF CONTEMPORARY IRISH FILM



Opening the Festival of Contemporary Irish Film in New York City was *Clash of the Ash*, by Fergus Tighe, about a star football player who faces dismally limited employment options.

Helena Mulkerns

St. Patrick's Day went down in the usual way last March in New York: the drunken celebration of a romanticized, sentimentalized country, several thousand miles (and often several generations) away for most of the revellers. But Ireland made a more representative appearance when the Festival of Contemporary Irish Film took place just a few days earlier on April 11-13th at the New School for Social Research.

The festival was put together by Patsey Murphy, a lecturer at Rathmines College in Dublin, one of the few schools in Ireland that offers courses in filmmaking. When the New School agreed to cosponsor the festival, additional financing was raised from the Irish airline Aer Lingus, the Bank of Ireland, Windmill Lane Studios in Dublin, and other sources. The aim was to bring to a U.S. audience films very rarely seen here. While most of the films have enjoyed success at festivals in Britain and Europe, the project was the first of its kind in New York. The features and shorts—all by independent filmmakers—presented a view of Ireland which was a revelation for some, distasteful for others, yet extremely vivid and intriguing. These views were discussed at a Saturday forum on April 12 with Irish directors Pat Murphy and Fergus Tighe, writer Evelyn Conlon, producer Jane Gogan, and New York writer and columnist Pete Hamill participating.

Suffering from severe economic problems, Ireland's unemployment rate is 20 percent, crippling and frustrating its youth. There are few alternatives for young people: some stay in the country, bored and very often becoming statistics in Ireland's inordinate drug/drink problem, some battle their way into the system to end up underpaid and struggling against inflation. Most, from the basically educated to college graduates, just leave the country. The age-old themes of emigration, alcoholism, and religious domination came up throughout the festival, along with the complex fanaticism and tragedy of Northern Ireland.

Clash of the Ash (1986), the festival's opener and winner of last year's Celtic Film Festival, tells the story of a young man in a small town in Ireland who finally realizes that, while he is a hero on the playing fields, he faces a future of unemployment or low-paid, unsuitable work. Despite pressure from his family and encouraged by the example of friends, he sets off finally for England. It's a simple story, but brilliantly brought to life by director Fergus Tighe, whose eye for character and sense of humor bring the tale to life and gain the viewers' sympathy.

Sometime City (1986), by Joe Lee and Frank Deasy, and *Boom Babies* (1987), by Siobhan Twomey, provide a more sober portrayal of urban life in Dublin. In the first, an unmarried mother ekes out an existence dependent on the overburdened Social Welfare system. Her boyfriend and his mates, all unemployed, take to cough syrup or drugs for amusement. Finally, sick of trying to cope, she leaves for London. Unemployed and bored *Boom Babies* steal cars for laughs and drink cider at bonfires near the ramshackle tower apartment blocks where they live. Their surroundings are shabby and poverty stricken, they live on the dole and parental hand-outs where available, and their lack of possibilities or motivation is clear.

If the latter two films lacked a little humor for some, *Pigs* did not. Made in 1984 by Joe Comerford, whose latest film, *Reefer and the Model*, just won Best Feature Film Award at the Celtic film festival in Wales, *Pigs* rambles through the broken world of an unemployed man who moves into an abandoned building in an old area of Dublin. Although depressed and confused, he has the heart to provide shelter in the house to a wonderful collection of eccentrics, hookers, dealers, scam artists, and thugs who eventually bring about his downfall. The misery and tragedy of the characters is counter-balanced by a sharp sense of the ridiculous and the singular atmosphere of the production.

There was additional diversity of material on offer: Yellow Asylum's excellent *Eh Joe* (1987) for example, based on Samuel Beckett's only

screenplay and made with the playwright's cooperation, or Barry Devlin's *Outside It's America* (1987), a fast-moving documentary that follows the band U2 on their last U.S. tour.

Breaking out of the urban environment, *Budawanny* (1986) was an unusual and controversial film which could be termed almost an Unamunotype essay on religion, love, and traditions. Based on a book by priest Padraig O'Standuin, Bob Quinn's silent film tells the story, through subtitles and occasional monologue, of a priest on a tiny island, whose love for his housekeeper exiles him from his parish and people. It hauntingly conveys the wildness and isolation of the West of Ireland and the simultaneous warmth and bigotry of the people inhabiting it, subtly commenting on Irish society in general. Quinn reveals the natural beauty of the country, an element perhaps lacking in the rest of the films. He has the essential feel of the sea, of the empty Western skies and dirt roads, so that even with simple shots he evokes its savage magic and beauty.

Against this almost timeless and remote background, urban Derry and Belfast provide a shocking contrast. Added to the economic depression felt in the Republic, the North has its own savagery to contend with. *Creggan*, an award-winning documentary made by journalist Mary Holland and Michael White, frankly depicts life in the Catholic area of Derry, concentrating on the effects of the famed Bloody Sunday incident in 1972 when 13 people were killed by the British Army. Unsentimental in its approach, its straightforward interviews and candid footage of the British Army conducting everyday duties evince the tension and sadness of the city. *Maeve*, by Irish director Pat Murphy, is a fictional although largely autobiographical film which sees Northern Ireland through the eyes of a feminist, back from London on a visit. It deals with the confused heroism that haunts Ireland, the role of the past in dictating the behavior of those enmeshed in the conflict, and the complex plight of women in Northern Ireland.

While these films give a chilling insight into what it is like to live in the war-torn North, those made in the Republic convey the uncertain, cruel legacy of a combination of colonial and Catholic rule. The lack of economic resources and temptation to leave the country, as Maeve does, as Phil in *Clash of the Ash* does, or as the heroine of *Sometime City* does, is often the actual experience of not only the heroes in the films, but their makers, too.

Much discussion at the forum centered on whether such an honest, often uncomplimentary view of Ireland was a desirable, or even a marketable one. It has always been the tendency to romanticize Ireland á la St. Patrick's Day or the infamous "Quiet Man," but the discussion concluded that the reality of today's Ireland merits and needs the kind of critical self-examination that only independent film will take. Self-definition and identity have dogged the Irish ever since the "Paddy" cartoons in *Punch* magazine of Victorian England, or Hollywood's barely less insulting portrayal of the Irish either as harmless cheerful drunks and bosomy maidens, imbecilic cops or psychopathic gunmen. There are certain cultural traits, but their complexity when examined by writers and filmmakers bears more resemblance to those of other minorities—such as the Black American or Hispanic cultural experience—than to British or U.S. ideas of Irish stereotypes. To avoid falling into the trap of catering to these expectations, the panelists agreed that it is essential to remain faithful to subjects most heartfelt by Irish filmmakers and aim at making quality films as opposed to films adapted for larger markets.

Distribution and marketing were another major point of discussion. Lack of finances and organization have always been the main problem. Additionally, since most independent films are less than feature length, their outlets are limited to festivals or art houses. For many years there was no agency to deal with this aspect of film. Historically, Irish independents made and distributed their own work, with the help, perhaps, of the Irish Film Institute, formed in 1945 by Liam O'Leary. The Institute was more of an archive, however, subsisting on a shoestring budget. Many filmmakers relied on income from producing government or private sector shorts to keep going, but in the mid-seventies, with the expansion of the National TV station and the financial slump, this option disappeared. After years of lobbying and determination, the Irish Film Board was created in 1981, enabling a new breed of talented independent to develop their ideas, such as Cathal Black, Bob Quinn, Joe Comerford, Pat Murphy, and Neil Jordan (whose talents have since expanded to international horizons with *Company of Wolves* and *Mona Lisa*).

The Board's budget was restricted, but it was often the first step in the making of a film, providing the basic financial investment that would encourage other financiers, such as the Irish Arts Council or Britain's Channel Four, to put up further funding. They began to explore the areas of distribution and coproduction, and within the last few years—with the newest generation of young filmmakers whose work was glimpsed in the festival—significant progress was made.

Last year the Film Board was scrapped, however, leaving no state body responsible for film. The bottom line for finances boiled down to the £30,000 allocated by the Irish Arts Council—barely enough to make one TV commercial. Since then an Action Committee, headed by Alan Gilsenan of Yellow Asylum, has been once again lobbying for the establishment of a new film board, but the situation is very severe. Film Base, a cooperative formed in 1986, received one of the last grants from the Film Board, to install new equipment for hire at noncommercial rates for filmmakers, and the Irish Film Institute is going ahead with plans for a National Film Center in Dublin, but there is no money forthcoming for actual production.

Rumors abound as to the future of film in Ireland. One is that a new film agency will be created by the government to deal exclusively with the art, with a budget of a half-million pounds per year. Another recent and unexpected source of funds has been the Irish National Lottery, which allocated £7-million to the arts last November, £15,000 each to the Dublin and Cork film festivals.

The last two major films to come from Ireland are Comerford's award-winning *Reefer and the Model* and *The Courier*, a thriller starring Gabriel Byrne, by City Vision, the makers of *Sometime City*. Both were developed with assistance from the Film Board, and *The Courier* received additional financing from Palace Pictures, whose previous credits include *Mona Lisa* and *Absolute Beginners*. These kinds of coproductions with companies in Britain and elsewhere provide encouraging precedents for Irish filmmakers, while young producers like Hilary McLachlin (*The Courier*) and Jane Gogan (*Clash of the Ash*) are gaining expertise in production and distribution. With the present near-impossibility of raising money in Ireland, it is certainly an area which will be further explored. The potential of Irish independent film was evident from the content of the recent New York festival, so one can only hope government plans for the establishment of a permanent film body will succeed in the near future.

Helena Mulkerns is an Irish freelance journalist living in New York City.

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser. Listings do not constitute an endorsement & since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

Domestic

AFI VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct. 27-30, CA. 8th annual competition & showcase for recent work by ind. videomakers. Accepts innovative work of any length & form, incl. doc, dramatic, experimental & TV productions. Programs over 100 hrs of videos from several nations. This yr fest looking for work specifically on issues of race, civil rights & censorship. Also scheduled are retrospectives, special presentations & panel discussions. Entry fee: $25. Format: 3/4". Deadline: July 1. Contact Kenneth Kirby, American Film Institute, 2021 North Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027; (213) 856-7787.

ANTHROPOS DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 3-9, CA. Founded in memory of Barbara Myerhoff, int'l

anthropologist, this fest will mark 2nd yr w/ stated purpose "to showcase non-fiction films about what it means to be human & to promote public appreciation of cross-cultural perspectives in understanding the world around us." Last yr presented over 100 new docs from over 30 countries, along w/ Dennis O'Rourke retrospective. Fest now presented by American Film Institute in assoc. w/ Discovery Channel. Films & videos shown in & out of competition. Competition cats—which carry prize of $1000 ea.—are ethnographic subjects, social issues, women's subjects, Jewish subjects & music & poetry films. $1000 award also goes to best student film. Several films shown last yr made TV sales. Entry fee: $30. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: July 15. Contact Vikram Jayanti, director, Anthropos Documentary Film Festival, Manor House, AFI, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027; (213) 856-7675.

CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 14-23, IL. Fest, now in 5th yr, searches out high-quality children's material for competition. Cats, by length: features (over 60 min.); shorts 15-60 min. & shorts under 15 min. All cats accept live action & animation. Television productions accepted in cats of single program & programs from series. Last yr featured over 100 films from 25 countries, w/ audiences of about 8000 ranging in age from 3-12 yrs. Jury includes children (age 6-11), who also cast votes for most popular film. Participating filmmakers offered hospitality. European & US distributors of film, TV, cable & home video attend festival to discover worthwhile productions. Fest working this yr to increase market aspect. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; 3/4" for TV programs. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact Milos Stehlik, Facets Multimedia, 1517 W. Fullerton Ave., Chicago, IL 60614; (312) 281-9075; NY contact is Susan Delson, 143 Chambers St., New York, NY 10007; (212) 571-1852.

CINETEX, Sept. 23-30, NV. Held in Las Vegas & sponsored by Interface Group, trade show & conference producer, in association w/ American Film Institute, this new event's mission is to bring together int'l & domestic film, television & video markets; sponsor a film & TV fest & conference & hold industry exposition. AFI responsible for creative, artistic & cultural content of Cinetex. Fest will accept "innovative" features. Contact Paul Fagen, Cinetex coordinator, AFI, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027; (213) 856-7707. For general information, contact Cinetex, 16055 Ventura Blvd, Encino, CA 91436; (818) 907-7788; telex: 951176; fax: (617) 449-6953.

HAWAII INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, early December, HI. "When Strangers Meet" is annual theme of noncompetitive fest, whose purpose is promotion of understanding among peoples of Asia, Pacific & US through cinema. All entries must be produced in US, Asia or Pacific & relate in some way to fest theme. East West Center award goes to film which best embodies theme of intercultural understanding. This yr's academic film symposium will explore how changes in family life are reflected in film & fest especially welcomes films which explore family relationships. Free screenings & seminars attract over 60,000 people. Over 130 films were shown last yr. Fest moves to neighbor islands following its run in Honolulu, incl. Kauai, Hawaii, Molokai, Maui & Lanai. Deadline: July 1. Contact Jeannette Paulson, coordinator, Hawaii International Film Festival, Institute of Culture & Communication, 1777 East West Rd., Honolulu, HI 96848; (808) 944-7666; telex: EWCAD 7430119.

OSWEGO INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct. 17-21, NY. Showcases independent film & video; now in 2nd yr. Accepts shorts (under 45 min.), docs (in personal or experimental style), experimental, personal & avant-garde work. Winning entries broadcast on public TV stations w/ director's permission & w/ honorarium paid to artist. Work must be produced in last 10 yrs. Entry fee: $12. Deadline: Sept. 19. Contact Carlos Steward, Oswego Art Center, Fort Ontario Park, Box 315, Oswego, NY 13126; (315) 342-3579.

INTERNATIONAL FILM & TELEVISION FESTIVAL OF NEW YORK, November, NY. 3 awards competitions for industrial/education work in following cats: television news & information, entertainment programs & promotion, music video; TV & cinema commercials; nonbroadcast (education & information, industrial & sponsored productions, made for home video). Each cat has numerous subcats, e.g. arts appreciation, society/social issues, human concerns, children/young adults. Now in 31st yr; last yr received over 5000 entries from 35 countries. Two awards programs at NY Sheraton Centre Hotel in Nov. Entry fees: $85-250. Formats: 16mm, 3/4" (film/video); 3/4" (multi-image/multimedia). Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact Sandy Mandelberger, director, International Film & TV Festival of New York, 5 W. 37th St., New York, NY 10018; (914) 238-4481.

TELLURIDE FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 2-5, CO. 15th yr of small, intimate, intense fest known for innovation & love of film. Several important new works premiered here. Program not announced in advance, but well-regarded program consists of premieres, archival films, retrospectives & 3 tributes to cinema past & present, int'l cinema & all disciplines—all of which play to bi-coastal audience of about 1000 filmmakers, distributors, critics & film enthusiasts. Organizers preview many selections at Cannes & through recommendations, but welcome unsolicited entries w/ high production values. Accepts feature, documentary & short films of any length on any subject. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact Stella Pence, Telluride Film Festival, National Film Preserve, Box B1156, Hanover, NH 03755; (603) 643-1255.

WOMEN IN FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 14-16, CA. Accepts feature, TV (episodic, movies of week, specials), docs, shorts, animated, music videos & student features & shorts; in all cats women must have been producers, directors, or writers. Lillian Gish Award presented in ea. cat. Films/videos must have been completed after July 1987; features should not have had theatrical release in LA. Program also incl. seminars & tribute to major actress. Entry fees: $60 (feature/TV); $50 (over 60 min.); $40 (30-60 min. & student features); $30 (under 30 min. & student shorts). Deadline: July 1. Contact Pamela Rosenberg, Women in Film Festival, 6464 Sunset Blvd., Suite 660, Hollywood, CA 90028; (213) 463-0931.

WOMEN OF THE AMERICAS FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, October, CA. Tribute to films & videos produced by Latin American women & ethnic women of US & Canada. All subjects, styles, themes welcome. Also accepts work by N. American women addressing concerns of Latin American &/or ethnic communities. Features workshops, panels & public forums. English works should be subtitled in Spanish & vice versa (unsubtitled works will be screened, however). Cine Accion may assist w/ subtitling for selected videos. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S 8, 3/4", 1/2", Beta. Deadline: July 31. Contact Festival Committee, Cine Accion, 3181A Mission St., San Francisco, CA 94110.

Foreign

AMIENS INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF FILMS AGAINST RACISM & FOR FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN PEOPLES, Nov. 17-27, France. Since 1980 this competitive fest has showcased alternative cinema by & about 3rd World peoples & cultural identity. 1987's program featured comprehensive overview of Native American feature & short films & videos, as well as tributes to Native American actors & directors. Actors from movies of the South made in the North invited. This yr will focus on cinema from India as well as work of Black, Native American & other 3rd World filmmakers. Amiens has received an "A" rating & competition section accepts features & shorts under 15 min. Info section. Concurrent market each day centers on specific regions, i.e. Africa, Latin America, Europe, US independents (market deadline Oct. 16; fees 350FF per screening; 100FF ea. additional film). Director Jean-Pierre Garcia attends American Film Festival & Independent Feature Film Market. Amiens is sister fest of FESPACO in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact Jean-Pierre Garcia, director, Festival International du Film d'Amiens, 36 rue de Noyon, 80000 Amiens, France; tel: 22916123/22910144; telex: CHAMCO 140754F (Attn JCA). NY contact: Joe Avila, Mountain Top Films, 53 E. Broadway, New York, NY 10002; (212) 732-4890.

AUSTRALIAN VIDEO FESTIVAL, September, Australia. Accepts videos in cats of video art, video graphics, music videos, documentary, drama/narrative, computer graphics, corporate video & student. Competitive; also, curated selections. Entry fee: $20. Format: 3/4", 1/2", Beta. Deadline: July. Contact Australian Video Festival, Box 316, NSW 2021, Australia; tel: (02) 360-2325.

EUROPEAN MEDIA ART FESTIVAL, Sept. 1-11, W. Germany. Program incl. experimental & artistic film & TV productions & creative works of video art, computer animation, holography, laser, installations, performances, multimedia. Held as part of 1988 European Year of Cinema & Television. Work must have been completed after April 1, 1987. Selected works paid 3DM/min. to max of 150DM. Sponsored by Osnabruck Experimental Film Workshop. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 8mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Europaisches Medienkunst Festival, Experimentalfilm-Workshop e.V., Postfach 1861, Hasestrasse 71, D-4500 Osnabruck, W. Germany; tel: (0541)21658.

GHENT INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF FLANDERS, Oct. 12-22, Belgium. 15th yr of fest dedicated to music in film. Program incl. music & film competition w/ theme "The Impact of Music on Film"; noncompeting musical film special events; previews; Filmspectrum (new world productions in all genres, styles & themes); a focus on Brazil, homages, fest retrospective, children's films, shorts, exhibitions & market, which debuted last yr. Competition cats incl. best soundtrack, best musical composer & best musical doc or narrative film; awards are $1500 ea. Filmtrax awards $1000 for best unpublished & unreleased score. Competing films must be over 50 min. & completed in 2 preceding yrs. Format: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact Vande Pitte, International Film Festival of Flanders-Ghent, Kortrijksesteenweg 1104, 9820 Ghent, Belgium; tel: (00)3291252512; telex: 12750b; fax: (00)3291237588.

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AIVF

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LEIPZIG INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF DOCUMENTARY & SHORT FILMS, Nov. 25-Dec. 1. Last yr was 30th anniv. of fest w/ annual theme "Films of the World for the Peace of the World." It is East Germany's premiere event for film & TV. Program incl. competition (for doc films, TV reports & docs, reconstructed docs, integral parts of journalistic TV magazines & animated films), information programs, retrospective, video section established last yr, press conferences & trade show. Golden & Silver Doves w/ cash awards (3000-5000M) go to film/TV productions under & over 35 min. as well as animated films. Other awards incl. special jury prize & prize to young filmmaker. Films should be premieres which have not been awarded prizes at other fests. Jonathan Miller of First Run/Icarus Films is US contact for submissions. Contact him before Aug. 30 at 200 Park Ave. S., #1319, New York, NY 10003; (212) 674-3375. Fest deadline: Sept. 30 for prescreening on video; Oct. 15 for film. Fest address: Ronald Trisch, director, Komitee Internationale Leipziger Dokumentar-und Kurzfilmwochen, Chodowieckistrasse 32, 1055 Berlin, German Democratic Republic; tel: 4300617.

MANNHEIM INTERNATIONAL FILMWEEK, Oct. 3-8, W. Germany. New first fiction features, critical docs, short fiction films, experimental & animated works form backbone of this competitive fest, which prides itself on making artistic discoveries & supporting ind. filmmaking. Now in 37th yr, fest awards 10,000DM Grand Prix of Mannheim to 1st fiction films at least 60 min. long. All others compete in other cats, whose prizes incl. 3000DM for a film over 45 min. that distinguishes itself through socio-political commitment, 3500DM Josef von Sternberg Prize for most original film & 5 Mannheim Film Ducats of 2000DM ea. Also offered is 10,000DM Grand Prix for best film emphasizing understanding, self-determination, resourcefulness & int'l solidarity from 3rd World country. Films must be German premieres unawarded in other European fests. Program also incl. information section. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Aug. 20. Contact Internationale Filmwoche Mannheim, Collini-Center-Galerie, D-6800 Mannheim 1, W. Germany; tel: (0621) 2932745; telex: 463423; fax: (0621) 101452.

MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF NEW CINEMA & VIDEO, Oct. 20-30, Canada. Director Claude Chamberlan searches out unusual & innovative ind. films & videos "on the basis of their originality & for the significant contribution they make to developing a new language in the field of creative audiovisual expression." His travels incl. several trips to NY during yr & he will be in contact w/ FIVF to screen possible entries this summer. Fest noncompetitive, but awards for best film in feature & short cats & best video offered independently by Québec Film Critics Assoc. This is fest's 17th yr. Film & video market runs concurrently & incl. all fest entries (screened on 3/4"). Entries must be Québec premieres, produced after Jan. 1, 1987. Entry fees: $50 film, $15 video. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4". Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact Festival International du Nouveau Cinema et de la Video Montréal, 3724, Boul. St. Laurent, Montréal, Québec, Canada H2X 2V8; (514) 843-4725; telex: 5560074 Cinequebec a/s FilmFest.

NYON INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 15-23, W. Germany. All-doc competitive fest leans toward films & videos that investigate contemporary social & political issues in new ways; psychological, cultural & religious themes also sought. Docs of all lengths, produced in the preceding yr, accepted & film & video screened equally. Preference given to world premieres & films which have not been in other European fests. Top prize is Gold Sesterce; other awards are Silver Sesterces for different types of docs, certificates of merit & special jury prizes. Accommodation for 3 nights provided for directors of films in competition. Director Erika de Hadeln, along w/ husband Moritz de Hadeln (director of Berlin Film Festival) & Manfred Salzgeber, also of Berlin & Nyon, will visit NY 2nd week in Aug. to prescreen possible entries, w/ assistance of US consultant Gordon Hitchens; they will be staying at Mayflower Hotel. Entries should be forwarded to Gordon Hitchens: 214 W. 85th St., #3W, New York, NY 10024; (212) 877-6856/362-0254. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Festival deadline: Sept. 15. Festival address: Nyon International Documentary Film Festival, Case Postale 98, CH-1260, Nyon, Switzerland; tel: (022) 616060; telex: 28163 ELEF CH.

SAO PAOLO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 15-31, Brazil. Independent filmmakers who have attended São Paolo have returned w/ high praise for organization, treatment of filmmakers & commitment to showcasing broad range of films. Over 100 int'l entries screened last yr. Enthusiasm runs high in both local audiences & fest organizers. Noncompetitive, although audience selects favorite film to receive Bandeira Paulista prize. Films, any theme or category, must be completed after Jan. 1987 and be Brazilian premieres. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact Leon Cakoff, director/Iara Lee, producer, Mostra International de Cinema em São Paulo, Al. Lorena, 937-Cj. 302, 01424 São Paolo, Brazil; tel: (11) 883-5137; telex: (11) 25043.

UPPSALA FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 21-30, Sweden. Held in home of Sweden's oldest univ., about 70 km north of Stockholm, fest accepts about 20 int'l feature-length Swedish premieres, as well as program of 100 docs & shorts; also holds int'l children & youth film fest. Competition accepts "new, unconventional, young cinema" in cats of feature, short fiction, animation & documentary; best of cat awards. Audiences of around 11,000 last yr watched 130 entries from 27 countries. Several titles picked up for distribution. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Aug. 20. Contact Uppsala Film Festival, Box 1746, 751 47 Uppsala, Sweden; tel: (46) 18-16 22 70/10 30 10; telex: 76020, attn: "Uppsala Film Festival."

FIVF TAPE LIBRARY

The FIVF Festival Bureau has established a tape library of members' current works to expedite screenings for upcoming film and video festivals. Members interested in depositing their work in the library should contact: Kathryn Bowser, Festival Bureau director, FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012, (212) 473-3400. ½" and ¾" tapes will be accepted.

Renee Tajima

The second season of **Deep Dish TV**, the first national satellite access network, uplinked on April 19. The weekly series of 16 one-hour programs consists of compilations of community television productions from around the country and each program is made up of segments of tapes or short works relating to an issue, such as housing or AIDS; a particular perspective, such as Latino images or television by young and older people; or a theme, like "borders" or political humor. The last five shows comprise selections from the International Women's Day Video Festival, a series produced in Boston by and about women. *Deep Dish TV* represents the efforts of an unprecedented alliance of public access producers, organizations, and advocates around the country. The shows are transmitted via satellite and seen on public access cable TV channels as well as by home dish owners. It is anticipated to play on approximately 500 cable systems this time around. Last year, in its premiere series, *Deep Dish TV* earned the best series award from the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers' Hometown USA festival. The series is transmitted through Satcom 3R-Tr.7 on Tuesdays, from three to four p.m. Eastern time, with cablecasts scheduled by local cable operators. *Deep Dish TV:* 339 Lafayette St., #6, New York, NY 10012; (212) 420-9045.

District of Columbia-based producer Samira Osman has just received funding from the Florida Endowment for the Humanities to research a feature on the rise and fall of Fort Mose, America's first free Black settlement. The story is set during the period when Britain and Spain battled for exclusive rights to colonize North America and will focus on the personal struggle of one man, Francisco Menendez, a first-generation slave who established the eighteenth-century settlement on the outskirts of St. Augustine, Florida. Menendez' journey took him from the harsh plantations of the British Carolinas to Spanish Florida, where it was rumored that escaped slaves had been granted asylum. Although he was sold into slavery again—to a Spanish treasury official—Menendez gained the trust of the Spanish by learning their language and converting to Catholicism and led a slave militia against the British. In 1738 he convinced the Spanish governor to grant unconditional freedom for all fugitives from Carolina, and Fort Mose was born. Osman hopes to uncover this history in a 90-minute dramatic film, tentatively entitled **Fort Mose**. *Fort Mose:* Fort Mose Film Project, 3600 T St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20007; (202) 333-9305.

Victor Schonfeld and Jenifer Millstone's new documentary, **Shattered Dreams: Picking up the Pieces**, had its theatrical premiere at New York's Film Forum last May. The 170-minute epic looks at the events behind the headlines in Israel, moving from the early dreams of an egalitarian progressive democracy to the near civil war that today, 40 years later, rages between right-wing extremists and the Israeli peace movement. *Shattered Dreams*, which was shot in English, Hebrew, and Arabic, has been picked up by New Yorker Films: 16 W. 61st St., New York, NY 10023; (212) 247-6110.



Gillian Barge appears as author Edith Wharton, whose life is the subject of the hour-long drama *Songs from the Heart*, by John MacGruer and Mickey Friedman.

Photo: John MacGruer

A narrative film by Edward Tim Lewis, **Serving Two Masters**, that links homelessness, South Africa, and the myth of Black upward mobility in the 1980s, premiered at the New Age Film Festival in Washington, D.C. last spring. Shot entirely on location in Washington, the film tells the story of two men: Father Matthew, a troubled Episcopal priest who roams the streets as a homeless man, preaching and wrestling with inner conflicts, and Cliff Jackson, a Black executive on the fast track who must publicly defend his company's policy of doing business in South Africa. A chance encounter brings the two men together in an intriguing conflict.

Lewis has also completed a new documentary short entitled **Spirit and Truth Music**, presenting the music of Washington, D.C.'s Flora Molton and Larry Wise, the young harmonica player who accompanies her. Molton has performed her original and traditional spirituals on the streets for more than 30 years. Lewis' documentary shows how artists like Molton pass on traditional culture and how it is kept alive by younger artists. *Serving Two Masters* and *Spirit and Truth Music:* Edward Tim Lewis, 609 Hamilton St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20011; (202) 882-3116.

A new videotape, **The Kissing Booth**, a playfully provocative dialogue on the meaning of love, sex, romance, and the perfect kiss, has just been released by videomakers Merrill Aldighieri and Joe Tripician. The tape combines computer animation and stylized live drama with four on-camera interviews. Featured are the witticisms of celebrity-author Quentin Crisp, who presents a humorous contrast to the exotic popisms of rock personality Spider. A second pairing is New York poet Emily XYZ, who expresses a youth-view with a hard edge, and screen actor Joe Morton, who reveals a family man's perspective. The 30-minute tape was produced in stereo, with computer image-processing created at the Experimental Television Center in Owego, New York. Public television stations WGBH-Boston and WNET-New York provided finishing funds and gave *The Kissing Booth* its television premiere on the *New Television* series. *The Kissing Booth:* Co-Directions, Inc., 276 Riverside Dr., #4C, New York, NY 10025; (212) 865-5069.

Independent filmmakers John MacGruer and Mickey Friedman, partners in Downtown Productions, have completed an hour-long drama, **Songs from the Heart**. In the film, the reminiscences of author Edith Wharton are interwoven with dramatic excerpts from her novels and short stories to create an intimate portrait of her life and times. Wharton, who won a Pulitzer Prize for her novel *The Age of Innocence* in 1920, is played by Gillian Barge, who currently performs with the National Theatre in London. The production of *Songs* was shot primarily at Edith Wharton's former estate, The Mount, in Western Massachusetts, where she wrote much of her work. Written by Friedman, *Songs* was first produced in 1984 as a play by Shakespeare & Company. The film version was made possible by grants from the Massachusetts Foundation for Humanities and Public Policy, the Larsen Fund, the Pittsfield, Massachusetts Arts Lottery, and local donors in Berkshire County, where the film was shot. *Songs from the Heart:* Downtown Productions, 22 Railroad St., Great Barrington, MA 01230; (413) 528-9395.

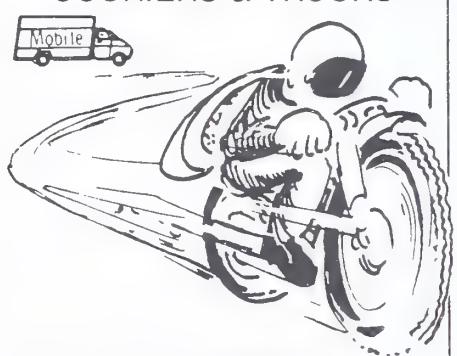
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Deadlines for **Classifieds** will be respected. These are the 8th of each month, **two months** prior to the cover date, e.g., August 8 for the October issue. Make check or money order—no cash, please—payable to FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

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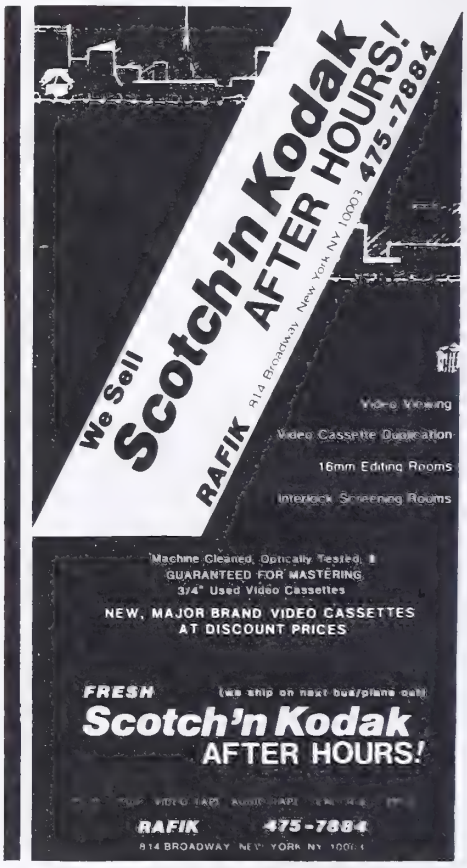
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NOTICES

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. **The Independent** reserves the right to edit for length.

Deadlines for **Notices** will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date, e.g., August 8 for the October issue. Send notices to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Conferences • Workshops

SIGGRAPH '88, annual conference on computer graphics & interactive techniques, will be held August 1-5 in Atlanta, GA. Conference will feature technical papers by researchers responsible for advances in computer graphics, panel sessions, 28 full-day courses, film/video & art shows & special seminars for newcomers & educators. Contact: Siggraph Conference Management Office, 111 E. Wacker Dr., #600, Chicago, IL 60601; (312) 644-6610.

GRANTSMANSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM is 5-day workshop covering preparation of grant proposals & foundation, corporate & government funding. Open to novice & experienced grant seekers, workshop combines instruction & practicial exercises taking participants through all stages of identifying funding sources, writing grant proposals & presenting proposals for review. $495 registration. July sessions: June 27-July 1, New York City; July 11-15, Seattle; 25-29, San Francisco; 25-29 Winston Salem. Contact: Grantsmanship Center, 650 S. Spring St., #507, Box 6210, Los Angeles, CA 90014; (800) 421-9512; (213) 689-9222 in CA.

CENTER FOR NEW TV: Summer class in July incl. Basic Video Prod., One Camera Portable Prod., Producing & Directing the Doc., Sound for Video, Videotape Editing, A/B Roll Editing & Practical & Legal Aspects of Freelancing. Contact: CNTV, 912 So. Wabash Ave., Chicago, IL 60605; (312) 427-5446.

CHANNELS FOR CHANGE. NFLCP's 11th annual nat'l convention, will be held July 14-16 at Hyatt Regency Hotel in Tampa, FLA. Over 90 workshops & seminars planned, ranging from evolving public policy environment w/in cable to workshops on TV production techniques. Also featured are awards night for 1988 Hometown USA Video Festival & keynote speakers Dr. Christopher Sterling, program director of the Telecommunications Policy Program at George Washington Univ. & Thomas Southwick, editor of *MultiChannel News*. Contact: Sue Miller Buske, Nat'l Federation of Local Cable Programmers, c/o The Buske Group, 2450 Portola Way, Sacramento, CA 95818; (916) 456-0757.

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE: July workshops for educators, students & media professionals at AFI Campus in LA—Hollywood Genres: Science Fiction Film, July 8 & 9, fee: $150; Creating for Television, July 11-15, fee: $400; Current Film Theory & Beyond, July 11-15, $325; Documentary Film & Video: A Critical View, July 18-22, $325; Teaching Acting, July 25-29, $325; Film Form: Story, Structure & Character, July 29-31, $225. Contact: AFI, Summer Workshops, Educ. Services, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027; (800) 221-6248; (213) 856-7725.

AES SUMMER PROGRAM IN ARTS MGMT: July 13-15 at U. Mass./Amherst. Seminars on marketing, planning, working w/ board & volunteers, financial mgmt., writing, desktop publishing, leadership development, time mgmt., multiculturalism, funding, PR & arts adm. Contact: Arts Extension Service Summer Program, Noncredit Registration Office, Div. of Continuing Ed., 615 Goodell, U. of MA, Amherst, MA 01003; (413) 545-2360.

Films • Tapes Wanted

CHANNEL L WORKING GROUP seeks videotapes for 10-wk *Video Spectrum* series, shown on both Manhattan cable systems. All work must be shot on video. Political or social themes preferred. Short format this year's theme; length up to 28 mins. Minorities encouraged to apply. Selected works paid $20/min. Submit tapes on 1/2" or 3/4", but must have 3/4" for telecast. Immediate deadline. Send entries w/ SAS return mailer to: Susan Stone Shapiro, Channel L Working Group, 51 Chambers St., Rm. 532, New York, NY 10007; (212) 964-2960.

NEW ENGLAND FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS seeks films/tapes for *Mixed Signals* cable access series, to be shown in New England this fall. Producers must have clearance of rights. Length 28 min. max. Formats: 3/4", 1/2" VHS, 16mm. Fee: $30/min. Deadline: August 1. Contact: Mixed Signals/NEFA, 678 Massachusetts Ave., 8th fl., Cambridge, MA 02139; (617) 492-2914.

CALIFORNIA NEWSREEL seeks films/tapes on Black American history & culture & Africa (esp. Southern Africa). Send inquiries & preview tapes to: Cornelius Moore, California Newsreel, 630 Natoma St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 621-6196.

Opportunities • Gigs

ARCHIVES ASS'T: A northern New England moving image archive needs help with collections care, research, exhibitions. F/T staff position in coastal Maine community just south of Bar Harbor. Call David Weiss, exec. dir., (207) 374-2109, or write: Northeast Historical Film, Route 175, Blue Hill Falls, ME 04615.

Publications • Software

NATIVE AMERICANS ON FILM & VIDEO, Vol. II, by Elizabeth Weatherford & Emelia Seubert, now available from Museum of the American Indian. Lists more than 200 recent docs, animation & short fictional films about Inuit & Indian peoples of North, Central & S. America. Price: $7. Contact: Film & Video Ctr, Museum of the Amer. Indian, Broadway at 155th St., New York, NY 10032.

CABLE TV: New publications from the Foundation for Community Service Cable TV incl. *Local Gov't & Cable TV: A Resource Directory for CA*, $35; *Community Channels, Free Speech & The Law: A Layman's Guide to Access Programming on Cable TV*, $25; *The Videotape Exchange Community Programming Cata-*



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logue, 3rd ed., $20 or $25 w/ 1987 update & *The Community Guide to Cable TV*, $5. Foundation member discount, 10%. Contact: Fnd. for Community Service Cable TV, 5010 Geary Blvd., Ste. 3, San Francisco, CA 94118; (415) 387-0200.

NEH 22ND ANNUAL REPORT: Free program & grant report from the Nat'l Endowment for the Humanities now available, while supply lasts. Send single copy requests to: NEH 1987 Annual Report, Rm. 406, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

CIRCLE-8: AN INDEX TO 8MM & SUPER 8MM FILMMAKERS, Vol. 1: U.S. & Puerto Rico, now available from Int'l Ctr. for 8mm Film & Video, edited by Antoinette Treadway. Price: $4. Contact: The Int'l Ctr. for 8mm Film & Video, 10-R Oxford St., Somerville, MA 02143; (617) 666-3372.

UNDERCUT #17: Spring 1988 "Cultural Identities" issue of the magazine from London Filmmakers' Coop now available. Subscriptions: individuals, $25; institutes, $50. Contact: Undercut, Marginal Distribution, 37 Vine Ave., Toronto, Ontario M5V 1C3, Canada.

VIDEOSPAIN: Catalogue of program of contemporary video from Spain, curated by Eugeni Bonet for Exit Art. Overview of new video from Madrid, Catalonia, Galacia & the Basque. Contact: Exit Art, 578 B'way, New York, NY 10012; (212) 966-7745.

INFERMENTAL 7: 1st U.S. edition of Infermental, annual collection of videotapes from around the world, organized by Hallwalls Contemporary Art Ctr. Now available for touring, 5-hr. exhibition of work by 58 artists: Public Image, De-Colonized Media, Sexuality or Gender, Epidemics & Image Dialects. Also available: catalogue edited by Chris Hill, Tony Conrad & Peter Weibel. For info, preview or catalogue, contact: Chris Hill, Hallwalls, 700 Main St., 4th fl., Buffalo, NY 14202; (716) 854-5828.

NEFA EXHIBITION TOURING PROGRAM: New England Foundation for the Arts exhibition pkgs avail. for rental incl. *Canadian Independent Shorts*, *South Africa Tapes: Living in a State of Emergency*, by Bonnie Donohue & *Video Visions*, org. by New England Women in Film & Video's Made for TV festival. Exhibitions may be rented by nonprofits, nonprofit, community-based divisions of profit-making institutions & local gov't. units. Contact: NEFA, 678 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02139.

MONEY FOR ARTISTS: *Guide to Grants & Awards for Individual Artists* now available from the Ctr. for Arts Info. $9.95, plus $2 postage & handing. Contact: Ctr. for Arts Info., 1285 Ave. of the Americas, 3rd fl., New York, NY 10019 ; (212) 977-2544.

BEFORE YOU SHOOT: *Guide to Low Budget Film Production*, by Helen Garvy, revised edition now available. Price: $10. Contact: Shire Press, Box 1728, Santa Cruz, CA 95061.

MEDIA ETHICS UPDATE: New biannual newsletter published each spring & fall will cover selected themes, events, publications, research & people w/in field of mass media ethics. Contact: Media Ethics Update, c/o Mass Communication, Emerson College, 100 Beacon St., Boston, MA 02116.

CINEMATECA REVISTA: Spring issues available from Libreria Papacito, Andes 1340-46, Uruguay; tel. 98-72-50 or 90-28-72.

UNESCO MEDIA REPORTS: Reports & surveys on state

of media educ. in various countries, groups working in the field & results of research & training action available from UNESCO, incl. "Learning About Media: Media Educ. & Communication Research," by James Halloran & Marcia Jones, "Int'l Annotated Bibliography on Media Education," by Ingrid Geretschlaeger & "Getting Started on Media Education," by John J. Pungente. Contact: Int'l Council for Film, TV & A-V Communication, UNESCO, 1 Rue Miollis, 75732 Paris Cedex 15; tel. 45-68-25-56.

GENLOCK: Travelling video exhibition presented by Interim Art & London Video Arts now available. Works in pkg represent 15 yrs. of tapes that illustrate different ways in which testimonial or monologue form has been explored by artists. Contact: Interim Art, 21 Beck Rd., London E8 4RE, UK; tel. 254-9607 or LVA, 23 Frith St., London W1V 5TS, UK; tel. 437-2786.

THE NONPROFIT ENTREPENEUR: *Creating Ventures to Earn Income*, compiled by Edward I. Skloot, now avail. from Foundation Ctr. $19.95 plus $2 postage & handling. Contact: Foundation Center, 79 Fifth Ave., Dept. KX, New York, NY 10003; (800) 424-9836; (212) 620-4230.

TAG: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GUIDE, a directory of resources for New York nonprofit organizations, published by Community Service Society's Technical Assistance Clearinghouse. $7.50. Contact: Community Service Society, Office of Info., Dept. of Public Affairs, 105 E. 22nd St., New York, NY 10010.

BOB BRODSKY & TONI TREADWAY have completed a revised 3rd edition of *Super 8 in The Video Age*, incl. info for teachers & film- & videomakers dealing with the scarcity of hardware & services & focusing on "found" equipment & production systems appropriate to their use. $16.95 ppd from Brodsky & Treadway, 10-R Oxford Street, Somerville, MA 02143-1608; (617) 666-3372.

ACCESS TV RESOURCE GUIDE, now being compiled, will be reference work summarizing articles from magazines, newspapers & scholarly journals, plus books, reports, surveys, congressional hearings, etc. Send contributions or inquiries to: Mike Jankowski, Box 7519, Austin, TX 78713; (512) 453-4894.

Resources • Funds

INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION FUND 1988: Sponsored by Southwest Alternative Media Project provides grands for ind. film- & videomakers residing in TX, AK, OK, KS, NE, MS, PR & U.S. Virgin Islands. 1 appl. per individual permitted. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: IPF 1988, SWAMP, 1519 W. Main, Houston, TX 77006.

EXPERIMENTAL TV CENTER now accepting appls for Fall 1988 residency program. Offers artists opportunity to study techniques of image-processing during 5-day intensive residency. Appls must include resumé & project description indicating how image-processing will be integrated. 1st-time appls are asked to send tape of recently completed work on 3/4" or VHS, along w/ SASE. Deadline: July 15. Contact: ETC, 180 Front St., Owego, NY 13827; (607) 687-1423.

MIDATLANTIC ARTS FOUNDATION: Visual Arts Residency Program appl. deadline: July 15. Contact: Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation, 11 E. Chase St., Ste. 1A, Baltimore, MD 21202; (301) 539-6656.

SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION Grant deadline:

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Aug. 15 for individuals & orgs. Contact: SC Arts Comm., 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201; (803) 734-8696.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS grants deadlines for Media Arts are Sept. 1 for Narrative Film Development, Nov. 14 for Film/Video Production & Jan. 30, 1989 for AFI/NEA Film Preservation Program. Contact: Media Arts, NEA, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES: Humanities Projects in Media deadline: Sept. 16, 1988. Contact: James Dougherty, NEH, 1100 Penn. Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 786-0278.

DAVID L. WOLPER STUDENT DOCUMENTARY AWARD: Call for entries for $1,000 cash prize to exceptional nonfiction film & video prod. at univ. level. Student-produced films & tapes completed after Jan. 1, 1987 eligible. 1/2" VHS cassettes must be submitted by July 15 accompanied by entry appl., verification of student status at time of prod. & $15 entry fee. Contact: Int'l Documentary Assn., 1551 So. Robertson Blvd., Ste. 201, Los Angeles, CA 90035, Attn: Student Award; (213) 284-8422.

FULLBRIGHT GRANTS for study abroad in film & video, appl. now avail. Deadline: Oct. 31. Contact: Institute of Int'l Education, 809 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017 or regional offices: 133 Carnegie Way, NW, Atlanta, GA 30303; 401 N. Wabash Ave., Chicago, IL 60611; 700 B'way, Denver, CO 80203; Ste. 1-A, World Trade Ctr., 1520 Texas Ave., Houston, TX 77002; 312 Sutter St., San Francisco, CA 94108.

THE MEDIA BUREAU provides funds for presentation of video & audiotapes in NY State, incl. screenings, installations & performances of multi-media works incorporating substantial amounts of video or radio, workshops, short residencies, tech. asst & equip. access relating directly to these projects. Appls reviewed continuously. Contact: Media Bureau, The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St., New York, NY 10011; (212) 255-5793.

THE FILM BUREAU of Film/Video Arts offers grants to NY State exhibition programs sponsored by nonprofit organizations. Matching funds up to $300 available for film rentals & up to $200 per speaking engagement for presentations by filmmakers, producers, directors, technicians & scholars. Deadlines: Aug. 15 & Jan. 15. Contact: Charles Vassallo, Film Bureau Coordinator, F/VA, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003-4797; (212) 673-9361.

Trims & Glitches

AVIVA SLESIN'S film *The Ten Year Lunch: The Wit and Legend of the Algonquin Round Table* received the 1988 Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature. Congratulations!

CONGRATULATIONS to AIVF winners of American Film Institute's Independent Filmmaker Program for 1988: Stephanie Black, David Ehrlich, Joanna Priestly, Louis Hock & Janice Tanaka.

KUDOS to 1988 Massachusetts Artists Fellowship Program winners in film & video: Izak Ben-Meir & Diane Hendrix, fellows in film; John Junkerman, Christian & Steffan Pierce & Ross McElwee, finalists in film & Judy Korin, finalist in video.

MANFRED KIRCHHEIMER was named Artist/Teacher of the Year by the School of Visual Arts, a surprise announcement made at the Guggenheim Museum. Congratulations!

CONGRATULATIONS to the overwhelming number of AIVF members who were named 1988 Fellows in Media by New York Foundation for the Arts. In film: Theo Cremona, Joel Freedman, Su Friedrich, Jim Hubbard, Roland Legiardi-Laura, Jennie Livingston, Mira Nair, Kevin Rafferty, Leslie Thornton & Jane Weinstock. In video: Shu Lea Cheang, Ken Feingold, Paul Garrin, Matthew Geller, Julie Harrison, Daniel Riesenfeld & Megan Roberts.

CONGRATS to AIVF member Barbara Herbich, coproducer of the Academy Award nominee *A Stitch for Time*.

KUDOS to Henry Hampton's series *Eyes on the Prize*, Ctr. for New American Media's program *American Tongues* & Richard Gordon, Carma Hinton & Kathy Kline of the Long Bow Group, for *Small Happiness: Women of a Chinese Village*. All earned prestigious Peabody Awards for excellence in broadcasting.

AIVF's own intern, Augyr T., has been named a regional winner in the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences 15th Annual Student Film Award in the Experimental Category. Kudos!

CONGRATULATIONS to AIVF members who have been named CPB Open Solicitation finalists: William Elwood, *The Road to Brown*; Robert Richter, *The World Bank & the I.M.F.*; Catherine Tatge, *Book of Days*; Susan Robeson, *The Jazz Master: The Life & Times of Benny Carter*; William Greaves, *Paul Robeson: A Son's Memoirs* & Ginny Durrin, *Second & D.*

KUDOS to Morgan Gwenwald, whose videotape project for the Daughters of Bilitis has been awarded funding from the Astraea Foundation & the Chicago Resource Center.

DISTRIBUTION GRANTS from the New York State Council on the Arts Film Program have been awarded to AIVF members John Hoffman, *AIDS: Changing the Rules*; Oren Rudavsky, *Spark Among the Ashes*; Phil Hartman, *No Picnic*; Robert Stone, *Radio Bikini*; Richard Adams, *Citizens*; Maxi Cohen, *Seven Women, Seven Sins*; Deborah Shaffer, *Fire from the Mountain*; Peggy Stern, *Stephanie* & Grania Gurievitch, *Kicking High...in the Golden Years*. Congrats!

MADE IN 8, the 8mm video loan program co-sponsored by 8mm Video Council & the Kitchen, has selected two AIVF members for production awards: Jim Hubbard for a documentary on the AIDS crisis & Penny Ward for a documentary on two teachers of Japanese classical dance. Kudos!

CONGRATULATIONS to Jennifer Fox, whose documentary *Beirut: The Last Home Movie* was awarded Le Prix Cinema du Reel.

RHYENA HALPERN'S *Language Says It* received an Oscar nomination as well as awards of distinction from numerous national & international film festivals. Congrats!

KUDOS to Ellen Meyers, recently selected to be a Fellow at the Nat'l Endowment for the Arts in the Media Division.

AIVF MEMBERS selected for Southeast Film & Video Fellowships are Robert Newton, *Dear Phil*; Nancy Yasecko, *Florida's Indian River*; David Williams, narrative short; Julie Dash, *Daughters of the Dust*;

Stevenson Palfi, *Toussaint*; Fred Johnson, tape on Appalachian scholar Cratis Williams; George King, *Goin to Chicago*; Kathleen Dowdey, *Brozik Public Art* & William Hill, *American Landscapes*. Nancy Yasecko & William Hill were also awarded Equip. Access Grants from South Carolina Arts Commission Media Arts Ctr. Kudos!

CONGRATS to winners of the 1988 Nat'l Media Owl Awards from the Retirement Research Assn.: Michal Aviad, Honorable Mention for *Acting Our Age*; Pauline Spiegel, Honorable Mention for *Neighbors Meeting Neighbors* & Ben Achtenberg, Honorable Mention for *A Perspective of Hope: Scenes From the Teaching Nursing Home*.

FOUR OF FIVE WINNERS of 1988 Guggenheim Fellowships in film & video are AIVF members: Steve Brand, Peter Entell, Ken Kobland & Yvonne Rainer. Congratulations!

DUANE SHERWOOD'S experimental music video *Drifting Apart* won 1st Prize in the music category at 4th Annual Visions of the U.S. video contest sponsored by Sony & AFI. Congrats!

KALYIAN, a tape by Barbara Sykes-Dietze, keeps marching on, this time winning an Honorable Mention at the 30th American Film & Video Festival.

1987 PAUL ROBESON FUND for Film & Video grants were awarded to AIVF members Penee Bender & Dee Dee Halleck for *De Peliculas*; El Salvador Media Project, *Central America: A Defiant Volcano*; Deborah Shaffer, *Fire from the Mountain*; Robert Richter, *Guatemala, A New Democracy?*; Pam Cohen, *Maria's Story*; Andy Johnson & Mimi Pickering, *Chemical Valley, USA*; Kevin White, *Not All Parents Are Straight*; Renee Tajima & Christine Choy, *Who Killed Vincent Chin?*; Kathe Sandler, *A Question of Color*; Marlon Riggs, *Ethnic Notions*; Lise Yasui, *For Memory*; Haile Gerima, *Nunu*; Loni Ding, *The Color of Honor*; Tami Gold, *The Forgotten Ones*; Alia Arasoughly, *Torn Living: Portraits of Palestine Americans*; J.T. Takagi, *Homes Apart*; Loretta Smith, *Born on the 4th of July*; Cathy Zheutlin, *One Big Step*; Caryn Rogoff, *Deep Dish*; Michal Aviad, *Acting Our Age*; Barbara Laing, *Crossing Borders*; Jane Weiner, *Inanna: The Goddess & the Storyteller*; Julie Harrison, *Positive Images*; Jan Krawitz, *Pulchritude's Price* & Theresa Tollini, *Women & Self-Sufficiency*.

KUDOS to Tom Triman, whose film *A Spark of Being* has won 1st place, Animation in 1987 Assn. of Cinematic Arts Film & Video Festival & 1st prize, 8mm, in the 1986 Cinemagic Short Film Search Awards.

CONGRATULATIONS to Kathleen Laughlin, winner of a Minnesota State Arts Board Fellowship.

KUDOS to Global Village Documentary Festival award winners Ilan Ziv, whose video series *Consuming Hunger* received Outstanding Achievement in Video & Renee Tajima & Christine Choy, whose *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* was named Outstanding Achievement in Film.

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PROGRAM NOTES

Editor's note: In this issue of *The Independent*, we are initiating this monthly column that will present reports by the various members of the AIVF/FIVF staff on their recent activities and achievements on the job. Although a great deal of the information that appears in the magazine derives from the work of the staff—e.g., the festival information generated by Festival Bureau director Kathryn Bowser or news about matters pertaining to public policies affecting indendent production based on the work of Lawrence Sapadin, our executive director—we have determined a need for a forum to give members regular updates on ongoing and new projects undertaken by the staff, as well as a clearer idea of the day-to-day work that goes on in our office. Our hope in doing this is that you, our members, will gain a better understanding of the multi-faceted activities of AIVF and FIVF, as well as information that will keep you abreast of your organization's programs.

Ethan Young

Membership/Programming Director

We are pleased to announce the forthcoming publication of the first AIVF Membership Directory. Response to the questionnaire mailed to all AIVF members last March was stronger than expected: nearly 50 percent of the members filled in the forms that will provide the basis for the directory. a grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation will help defray the costs of processing, typesetting, and printing the information. It's apparent that members are excited about the project, and we are sure the end result won't disappoint.

Despite the proliferation of local trade directories aimed at media producers across the country, the need for a national list of independent film- and videomakers has never before been seriously tackled. The AIVF directory will answer some of the information requests most frequently received by the staff working in our New York office. They include: how to contact producers and crew, where to find independents in various localities, and the whereabouts of old friends and colleagues in this field of persistent relocaters.

The listings will include the name and address of every one of AIVF's 4,500 plus members, with phone numbers included when available. The skills of the close to 2,000 members who responded to our directory questionaire will also be listed, along with a personal statement by each of them. This information about the membership will be organized regionally: New York metro area, Northeast, Midwest, South/Southeast, West Coast, and international. The listings will be cross-indexed alphabetically and by skill categories: producer, camera, production assistant, composer, etc.

It will take a few months to enter the thousands of pages of membership data into our computers during the summer. Our goal is to have the information processed, merged, and printed by winter 1988/89.

The expressed interest in the directory reminds us that AIVF's strongest asset is the collective membership. As the largest and broadest group of independents in the country, we recognize the need for continued outreach, establishing new communications bridges, and cementing the ties between disparate groups and individuals that build a loose, largely freelance network into an international community.

MEMORANDA

CORRECTION

The following U.S. films and videotapes participated in the Berlin International Film Festival but were omitted from the article "Where the Action Was: American Independents in Berlin" in the May 1988 issue of *The Independent*: *Black Menu*, by Megan Daniels; *50 Years of Action*, by Douglas Stewart; *Fingered*, by Richard Kern; *Selected Works*, by George Kuchar; *Ken Death Gets Out of Jail*, by Gus Van Sant; *Still Life/Dialogue*, by Bettina Marks; *Testing the Limits*, by the Testing the Limits Collective; and *Transients*, by Juan Valdiva.

AIVF THANKS

The Emergency Tax Equity Fund, established by AIVF to support efforts to convince Congress to exempt independent film- and videomakers from the uniform capitalization rules of the 1986 Tax Reform Act [see "Media Clips" and "Legal Briefs," March 1988], has been supported by contributions from:

Tim Boettcher, Robert Dalva, Ruby Gillman, Gary Glassman, Donald Goldmacher, Sara Hornbacher, Independent Feature Project/West, Ezra Litwak, Janet Mendelson, Sidney Milwe, Deanna Morse, Nancy Rigg, Susan Rosenberg, Chris Spotted Eagle, David Tapper, Justin West, Charles Weinstein, Dan Weissman, and David Williams.

AIVF thanks all those who have donated to the Fund so far and encourages all other members to send a check or money order, made out to Emergency Tax Equity Fund, to AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012. All donations are deductible as business expenses.

Additional contributions to AIVF's Emergency Legislative Fund, which is being used to advocate a National Independent Program Service for public television, have been received from:

Appalshop, Donald Cox, Constance Dry, Rachel Field, Michael Golub, Wendy Lidell, David Haas, Ellen Hollander, International House of Philadelphia, Janet Mendelson, Deanna Morse, Steven Murphy, New Community Cinema, Robert Richter, Steven Rykerd, Jay and Linda Sandrich, Hannah Hope Randolph Shipley, David Shulman, Daniel Sipe, Barton Weiss, and Justin West.

AIVF continues to work with the National Coalition of Independent Public Television Producers toward the establishment of NIPS, as well as congressional guarantees for the five public broadcasting minority programming consortia, and welcomes more contributions, addressed to: AIVF Emergency Legislative Fund, AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, an information clearinghouse, and a grant making program. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, foundations and organizations: The New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fund, the Beldon Fund, the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, the Consolidated Edison Company of New York, the Benton Foundation, the Funding Exchange, and the dozens of organizations that advertise in *The Independent*.

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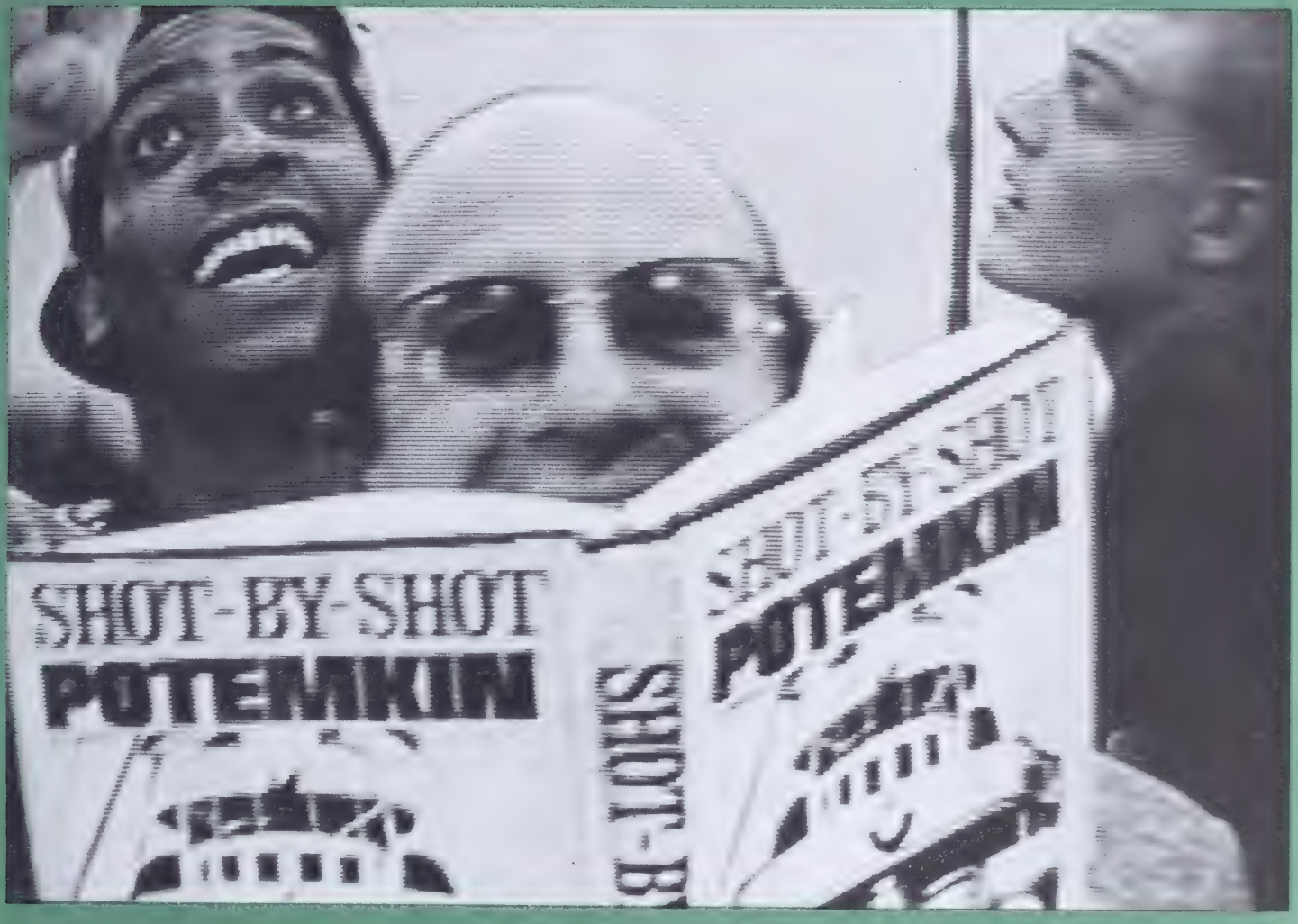
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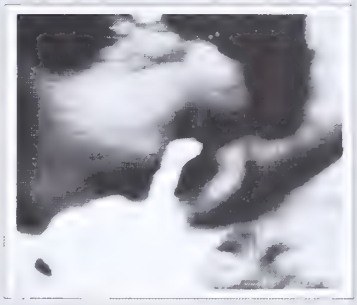
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COVER: In the videotape *Steps*, by Zbigniew Rybczynski, American cineastes-cum-tourists intermingle with Sergei Eisenstein's characters in the famous Odessa steps sequence of *Potemkin*, with the help of video post-production techniques. Rybczynski's tape is among those independent productions that have gotten airtime on French television. In "Le PAF (Paysage Audiovisuel Française): The Changing French Audio-Visual Landscape," Roy Lekus provides an overview of broadcast television in France—its history and politics, its recent expansion and privatization, and the opportunities for independents. Photo by JoAnne Seador.



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LETTERS

WHY PUBLIC TV?

To the editor:

I salute AIVF and *The Independent* for its work on the public TV agenda and the decision to devote an entire issue to the topic [June 1988].

I had come to feel that the time and energy focused on public TV access was out of proportion to its importance and potentially a disservice to the AIVF membership. "Independent access" in its worst incarnation has become a cul-de-sac, encouraging too many producers to fight for too few dollars, for too little airtime. This result is exacerbated by a CPB-fostered *Wheel of Fortune* mentality in which we allow ourselves to be pitted against one another, with gatherings of two or more film/videomakers too often decaying into personal complaints and recriminations in the guise of exercising artistic principles. Some of this is inevitable, but the balance has been thrown way off by the CPB structure you examine. Your resurrection of CPB institutional history has reminded me that it didn't start out that way, and your decision to devote an entire issue to it wisely emphasizes this. I'm certain there are many others like me who are grateful to you for sticking with this fight.

The stake for the future is high. As satellite and cable technology and hardware become more and more available, the terms of this debate will change yet again. "Broadcasting" will evolve into forms of mass communication which differ from the present more than we can ever imagine. Who knows what "public TV" will mean around the next bend in the road?

As we move toward these choices, your patient insistence that we understand and manage our share of the CPB institution is a major contribution to a shared objective: more and more people learning to make more and more images, more and more cheaply, for more and more others to see. Nice going.

—Jack Levine
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SHOWDOWN IN KANSAS CITY: KKK VS. AMERICAN CABLEVISION

The First Amendment sometimes leads to strange bedfellows. In Kansas City, Missouri, local Ku Klux Klan members have found a friend in the American Civil Liberties Union, which has agreed to defend the right of the white supremacist group to use the local public access cable channel. In June, the ACLU announced that it will sue the City Council on behalf of the KKK, following the enactment of an ordinance that effectively denies the group access.

The controversy first hit in January when the Missouri Knights, an affiliate of the KKK, tried to schedule time on American Cablevision's public access Channel 20. The system is owned by American Television and Communications and TeleCommunications, Inc., and managed by ATC. The program in question is *Race and Reason*, produced by the White Aryan Resistance organization and already carried on a number of access channels throughout the country, including cable systems in southern California, San Francisco, Austin, Atlanta, Memphis, Chicago, and Pittsburgh, as well as Portland, Oregon; Pocatello, Idaho; Raleigh, North Carolina; and Richmond, Virginia.

American Cablevision in Kansas City first refused to allow *Race and Reason* on public access because it is not produced locally. Several local Klan members then tried to enroll in the access training program, but they couldn't assemble the eight participants required by the company for receiving instruction in how to produce an access program. The company brought the matter before the City Council. On May 26, a resolution to restrict KKK access to the channel, backed by Mayor Richard Berkley and the cable company, became deadlocked in a vote of six to six by the council. The measure would have changed the cable company's franchise agreement with the city, renaming the "public access" channel "community access" and giving American control over the editorial content of programs and use of its facilities. In June, the council passed a similar resolution.

As in other cities, *Race and Reason* has sparked debate over free speech, attracting the attention of nationally recognized advocates such as the ACLU and *Village Voice* columnist Nat Hentoff. Initially, there was opposition to the program in Austin and Atlanta, but those events did not attract the kind of attention generated by the Kansas City case. Predictably, the controversy over *Race and Reason* has fueled arguments supporting cable companies' rights to First Amendment protection. The cable industry would like the courts to apply the same rules governing freedom of speech as those enjoyed by the print media. Indeed, one Kansas City council member told *Broadcasting*, "The real question is whether the unlimited public access requirement doesn't constitutionally restrict the cable company's First Amendment rights."

In Kansas City, one prickly factor in the dispute is that the local origination studio is in a predominantly Black neighborhood. Klan officials have informed American that they will protect themselves with heavily armed security men—a scenario ripe for confrontation. Meanwhile, the ACLU will go to bat for the KKK's First Amendment rights, but without endorsing their political philosophy.

RENEE TAJIMA

NOTES ON NAMAC

To no one's surprise, the action at this year's National Alliance of Media Arts Centers' conference, held in Atlanta from May 18 to 21, took place not at the scheduled panels, but in the hallways, over lunch, and in impromptu caucuses. And there was some action. A Third World caucus was formed. A large contingent from the newly revived and energetic Ohio Valley Regional Media Arts Coalition (OVRMAC) attended, generating interest and potential members among other producers from the area. And, in addition to the newsletters being discussed by several regional and minority groups, NAMAC itself announced plans to revive the *Film and Video Makers Travel Sheet*, this time in database form—a project spearheaded by Pacific Film Archives, whose general manager is NAMAC's outgoing copresident, Stephen Gong. (He and Mary Lea Bandy stepped aside at the conference's conclusion for the newly elected copresidents, Gail Silva of Film Arts Foundation and Patrick Scott of the Los Angeles Educational Partnership.)

These stirrings of life within NAMAC are a welcome sign. For a number of years, NAMAC has drifted along without a clearly defined direction or purpose, beyond the opportunity to meet with peers at NAMAC's annual conference. It has been sluggish, at best, in responding to criticisms concerning the narrow range of media organizations included in its membership—in particular, the lack of organizations representing the interests of people of color.

NAMAC's recent flush of activity is due in part to the $50,000 grants awarded both this year and last by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. The funds have helped resuscitate NAMAC in two ways. They enable it to undertake specific projects like the *Travel Sheet*, the annual conference, and the publication of its newsletter-*Media Arts*. Equally important is the foundation's message that NAMAC is being taken seriously. This in turn has encouraged its members to do the same—a point expressly made by the Third World caucus in a statement read at the conference's end.

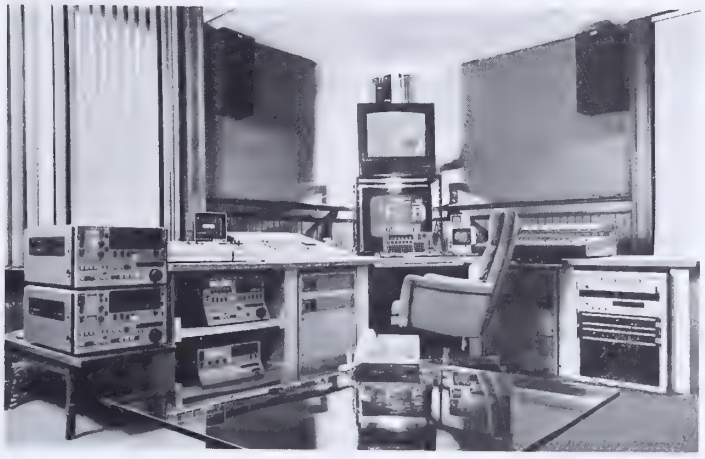
The Third World caucus came about as a result of an outreach effort by NAMAC to media arts centers run by and for people of color. Their virtual absence from the organization's annual conferences has troubled NAMAC throughout its history, and one year resulted in their boycotting the annual conference. This time around, at Stephen Gong's suggestion, NAMAC extended invitations to emerging organizations and organizations serving minority constituencies that had not previously been involved with NAMAC. Several state arts councils also managed to contribute travel subsidies. About a dozen invitees attended as a result, including representatives from the Latino Collaborative, Asian CineVision, New Liberty Productions, Visual Communications, and the Media Access Project, among others.

In order to prevent these new individuals from remaining isolated or ignored during the conference—token presences—a one-day pre-conference workshop was scheduled. Its purpose, according to arts consultant Ruby Lerner, who ran the workshop, was to "help new people feel more comfortable.... This group felt empowered enough to take a more active role." Demographics emerged as a key issue during the workshop. (One of Lerner's ground-rules was that no one could talk about money.) The dialogue that began in the workshop continued afterwards, gathering momentum until a Third World caucus coalesced. "We realized that we'd come all this way, we needed to talk about these things in depth, and NAMAC was a good place to do it," says to Reginald Woolery of the Media Access Project and the New York Media Alliance. "We wanted to discuss our direct interests, but in a way that they could be shared with NAMAC at large."

The sharing began at the general membership meeting, when spokespeople for the Third World



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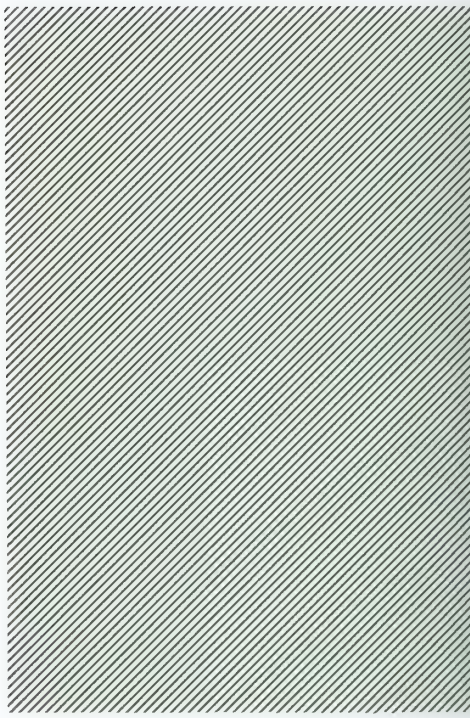
caucus read a statement explaining the purpose of the caucus meeting: "to discuss possible ways of increasing our numbers, faces, clarifying terminologies, identifying areas of concern, and generally replay debates that have been glossed-over or left uninformed by workshop facilitators; and to work toward the March 1989 conference in Rochester, New York, especially with its focus on education, in an empowering, organized fashion." Pursuant to the latter, the statement outlined a number of specific recommendations: seeking out and inviting MACs serving people of color; identifying critics, scholars, historians, and producers (including audio) to make presentations at NAMAC '89; working with the board of directors and conference organizers to address the "correlation between deficient Third World film/video/audio particularly, and conference costs and expenses"; circulating the Media Access Project report; and beginning a process of "communication and advocacy...the lack of which has stunted our ability to be recognized or taken seriously...."

The first follow-up step, according to Woolery, will be the publication of the caucus' statement in *Media Arts*. Next will be a letter sent to the 1989 conference organizers regarding "a programmatic role" for people of color. While specific roles are still evolving, members of the caucus expect to stay in touch and play a direct part in facilitating the steps they proposed.

Another group taking advantage of the opportunity to meet and chart a future direction was the newly elected board of OVRMAC. Dormant for some time, OVRMAC owes its recent revival largely to money and a push from the Ohio Arts Council. Its initial focus, reported on at the conference, was a local Program Fair for Ohio public television stations held last spring, which exclusively featured independent productions. The project "amazed" many NAMAC old-timers, according to OVRMAC board member Susan Halpern. Their amazement was probably as much with the energy shown by one of the regional independent media organizations, most of which have long been defunct, as with OVRMAC's success in getting public television programmers to look at local independent films and tapes.

While OVRMAC is now composed primarily of Ohio members, growing interest among people from the surrounding states became evident during the NAMAC conference. Established organizations like Appalshop, Pittsburgh Filmmakers, and the Carnegie Museum of Art were present at OVRMAC's meeting, as well as producers and less established groups from Kentucky, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. OVRMAC also has a strong contingent of cable access producers who, by numerous accounts, provide much of the organization's energy. Some are currently drafting a paper on "Considerations for Independent Producers Working for Cable Access," which, according to producer Fred Johnson from Covington, Kentucky, will be "floated around" before future conferences which attract both indepen-


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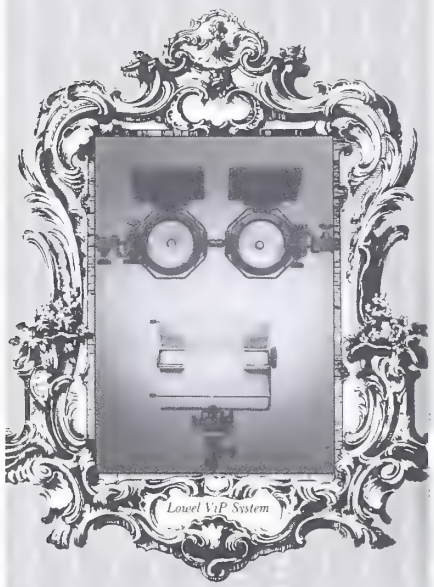
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dents and access producers—e.g., NAMAC or the National Federation of Local Cable Producers. Johnson hopes such a paper might enable independents and access producers to stop "trading clichés"—where the discussion at NAMAC got stuck—and help move discussion to a more complex and useful level.

OVRMAC will be hiring a part-time director and publishing a newsletter with OAC funding. Their hope is that other state arts councils from the Ohio River Valley region will start chipping in. Key arts funders from Pennsylvania and Kentucky were present at NAMAC, as well as the National Endowment for the Art's representative for the Southeast region. All were made aware of OVRMAC's goings-on.

A version of the *Film and Video Makers Travel Sheet* is being brought back, evidently due to popular demand, after more than a year's absence. Its reincarnation in database form was outlined in detail in the special issue of *Media Arts* published for the conference. According to Stephen Gong, the project will be operational by year's end. By then the program should be completed, debugged, and set up in a number of "test centers." If this and all the other agendas now being set in motion come to fruition on schedule, 1989 might be a vintage year for NAMAC.

PATRICIA THOMSON

MAPPING MEDIA IN NEW YORK STATE

The first of June marks the beginning of the second stage of the Media Action Project (MAP), a comprehensive research project designed to investigate the status of media by Afro-American, Latino, Asian American, and Native American producers in New York State. The first segment of the project—conducted in collaboration with the New York Media Alliance and funded by the New York State Council on the Arts' Media Program, the Department of Cultural Affairs, and the National Endowment for the Arts' Expansion Arts Program—surveyed and interviewed over 300 producers of color about their aesthetics and experiences, as well as the obstacles they encounter, their needs, and their suggestions on how to improve general conditions for people of color working in the media. This aspect of the project was completed in 1987 by the Film News Now Foundation. The views of these makers of video, TV, cable, and radio have been compiled in a draft *Media Action Report*, which will be published after completion of the project's second stage.

The second leg of the MAP project includes a six-month, field-wide survey of institutional resources available to people of color in New York State. To assess the range of resources accessible, the Film News staff plans to circulate surveys to funding agencies, media centers, community centers, exhibitors, distributors, and educators and conduct personal interviews with key members of the groups mentioned above. An advisory board consisting of members of the independent media community will be formed to provide the project with overall guidance.

"In addition to mailing surveys, we hope to get a dialogue going amongst the various institutions we will be talking to," says Reggie Woolery, MAP's new director and membership coordinator for the Media Alliance. "Our goal is not only to locate available resources, but also to invite new ideas on how these resources can be reworked or improved upon to benefit people of color in the media." Woolery and assistant Lorna Johnson will also attend conferences and meetings throughout the state and collaborate with conference organizers to improve the representation of people of color at those meetings and in the field in general. The information and recommendations they collect will be incorporated into the *Media Action Report*. In order to participate in the project or for further information, contact Reggie Woolery or Lorna Johnson, Film News Now, 335 W. 38th Street, 5th floor, New York, NY 10018; (212) 971-6061.

UNION MERGERS ON THE TABLE

Just as merger mania has swept the media industries, some of the workers in those fields are considering combining forces. A primary mover in this effort is the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians (NABET), which in March reintroduced a proposal to merge with the International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees (IATSE) and met again in June with the leaders of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) to consider the possiblity of a marriage.

Rafael PiRoman, NABET Local 15's business manager, believes that studios and networks have become more savvy at using non-union workers. "Management is merging into conglomerates, and we're still balkanized." He maintains that the traditional organization of today's entertainment unions along the lines of craft locals representing special interests is "an anachronism, a throwback to a time where access to our industry could be controlled to some degree by the unions, a situation which is absolutely no longer the case." He advocates a vertical reorganization that could mount concerted actions that would ensure workers' interests.

In the past year NABET and IATSE have put aside many of their disagreements in order to conduct joint activities, such as job actions against non-union production in New York City. An actual merger of the two unions still seems remote, given the historic rivalry between the two organizations and their differing definitions of turf in various parts of the country. But, given the success of anti-union management tactics, such as

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the failure of NABET's strike against NBC last year, the impetus to cooperate has become more urgent.

So far, no formal discussions have taken place between NABET and IATSE, although according to PiRoman the foundation is being laid to revive the idea of a merger. "In the old days, we barely communicated," he explains, "but now, we tell each other what we're doing and talk about real problems [that both unions experience]." PiRoman also attributes the renewed interest to changes in the IATSE leadership as well as changes in the operations of the industry. Without providing details about the terms under discussion, PiRoman answers those skeptical about the revival of the recent NABET/IATSE proposal: "[It] may be just talk, but it is talk about a reality that's kicking us in the head...one that we can no longer afford to ignore." IATSE spokespeople could not be reached for comment.

NABET has made more progress in its venture with IBEW, which represents CBS employees. A merger of NABET and IBEW would mean combining NABET's 20,000 membership (14,000 of which are in broadcast operations) with IBEW's one-million (13,000 in broadcasting and recording). An item in the May issue of NABET 15's newsletter, *In Focus*, reported that, in addition to past overtures about a possible merger, NABET and IBEW leaders have met four times, the last of which was in April. Both groups plan to reconvene on June 20 and 21 in Washington, D.C., where, according to NABET president James Nolan, they hope to finalize the terms of a merger. With that agreement in hand, NABET will approach the relevant portions of its membership for input. And following these consultations, NABET leaders will then return to the tables with IBEW and evaluate the need for further talks. If a fusion appears feasible, it would have to be approved by a two-thirds vote of NABET's membership and IBEW's president, John Barry.

While recognizing the urgency of joint action vis à vis an industry in flux, president of NABET International James Nolan, writing in the union's newsletter, cautioned the membership that the discussions with IBEW are preliminary and "exploratory" in nature, aimed "at determining whether or not a merger would be in the best interest of the two unions and their respective membership." At this stage, however, the labor battles going on in the entertainment business—and the intransigence on the part of management in meeting workers' demands—may well propel the various unions to cooperate more than ever before.

QUYNH THAI, WITH J.T. TAKAGI

LAVINE LEAVES ROCKEFELLER

In the past few years, the Rockefeller Foundation has reemerged as one of the leaders in private media funding. Among the foundation's staff, the person who has shaped much of this recent development is associate director of the Arts and Humanities Division Steven Lavine, who left the foundation in June for his new job as president of the California Institute of the Arts in Los Angeles. Since his arrival at Rockefeller in 1981, Lavine has witnessed the growth of the foundation's media program "from about $250,000 a year to $2-million." Summing up his experience at the foundation, he says, "I feel proud of the fact that I've been part of getting us back in the game."

In concert with its overall policies, the film/video programs that have been initiated and implemented by the Rockefeller Foundation in this decade focus on the support of international and intercultural media. Last year, the first round of film/video fellowships for international and intercultural media projects were announced—seven fellowships in all, $35,000 apiece. This year, Lavine says, the number of fellowships will double. The foundation has also established a reserve fund of over $300,000, and film/video fellowship recipients will be eligible to submit applications for production support from that fund. The plan allows for four or five $75,000 grants, which will be determined by the same panel convened to award fellowships. By means of the program, the foundation seeks to foster media projects that combine "concern with content and concern with formal issues," says Lavine.

Rockefeller is now devoting almost $800,000 to the film/video fellowship category alone. This, Lavine explains, is the cornerstone for the foundation's media funding, and he doesn't believe that his departure will affect its stability. But the grants to individual film/videomakers hardly account for the extent of Rockefeller's present activities or plans. Next February, the foundation is sponsoring a one-week conference entitled "High Culture, Popular Culture: Media Representations of the Other." Invitees include filmmakers ranging from Yvonne Rainer to Tomas Gutierrez Alea and theorists like Teresa de Lauretis, Tania Modleski, and Frederic Jameson. This event, which Lavine describes as an outgrowth of the fellowship program, will also result in a book published by the foundation.

Another major component of Rockefeller's media funding is its support for large-scale, multipart projects, primarily work intended for broadcast on public television. Two recent recipients of foundation support were the six-part series *Eyes on the Prize* and the videotape version of Peter Brooks' six-hour epic *The Mahabharata*, and this year the WGBH series *The Other Americas* is benefitting from the foundation's largesse. As Lavine points out, these programs, too, fall within Rockefeller's larger goal of promoting international and intercultural projects.

Yet another on-going area of Rockefeller support is what Lavine calls "public TV access points," which include special series and showcases like *Alive from Off-Center*, *New Television*, *Windows*

on World TV, and *Channel Crossings*, as well as underwriting some of the international programs shown on the City University of New York's cable channel.

This year, about $200,000 of foundation money has also been directed toward a few distribution and research projects related to international media production, such as the International Public Television Screening Conference (INPUT), a program of Latin American films being compiled by Linda Blackaby at the Neighborhood Film/Video Project in Philadelphia, a study of international resources for independent media producers being conducted by the Foundation for Independent Video and Film, and *The Cutting Edge* program of foreign feature films circulated by Wendy Lidell's International Film Circuit.

Looking forward to his new job as president of a major art school, Lavine notes that CalArts has "the best character animation program in the world" within its prestigious film school as well as an active program of video education in its art school. CalArts' visual arts program, he ventures, "could claim to be the best in the country, based on the acceptance of its graduates," but adds that the institution is "strong in all the arts, except writing." In terms of making the move from the world of philanthropy to education, he comments, "If there is a downside to the foundation, it was that we float above the fray. We worry about media, but not media in New York City. What's exciting about going to CalArts is that the school plays an essential role in the local ecology of the arts."

The Rockefeller Foundation will not leave a vacuum in its media funding following Lavine's departure. The foundation will hire a new associate director of Arts and Humanities, and Janet Sternberg, former program director at the New York Council on the Humanities, will act as a consultant overseeing film/video activities for the Arts and Humanities Division. John Hanhardt will continue as a consultant for the film/video fellowship program.

MARTHA GEVER

SEQUELS

The **New York State Council on the Arts'** $7-million budget increase, approved by state legislators last spring ["Sequels," July 1988], has been withdrawn, due to a shortfall of $900-million in state tax revenues. Miscalculations stemming from the changes in federal tax law led Governor Mario Cuomo to freeze the NYSCA budget for fiscal year 1988/89 at last year's level—$55-million. State legislators still must approve or revise the Governor's recommended cuts, and part of the $7-million may be restored. In the meantime, NYSCA faces a hiring freeze and will be unable to purchase new equipment, publish their newsletter, or print new program guidelines. 1989/90 applicants will use the 1988/89 guidelines.

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AN INTERVIEW WITH LILITH VIDEO



Dozens of women film- and video-makers from Latin American and Caribbean countries gathered for Cocina de Imagenes, a 10-day festival in Mexico City. The work of the Brazilian video collective Lilith Video was one of the event's highlights.

Photo: Ginny Stikeman

Liz Kotz

In October 1987 the independent Mexican film distribution company Zafra hosted the first Cocina de Imagenes, a 10-day festival of film and video by Latin American and Caribbean women. The event provided a ground-breaking forum for the exhibition of work by Latin American women and a rare opportunity to observe and compare current work in independent media. Attended by dozens of film- and videomakers from throughout the continent, the Cocina also created what its organizers hope will be a historic occasion for these independent producers to meet, talk, and build a movement.

One of the highlights of the video portion of the Cocina was the work of Lilith Video, a collective of seven Brazilian women in São Paulo. They showed several of their interview-based tapes about the experiences of women in Brazil, ranging from discussions with São Paulo prostitutes in *Beijo Na Boca* (*Kiss on the Mouth*), to women who work in sugar cane fields talking about their lives in *Mulheres No Canavial* (*Women in the Cane Fields*), and Black women talking about racial pride and racism in Brazil in *Mulheres Negras* (*Black Women*). Fast-moving and often humorous, these incisive works explored the strength and diversity of various women's approaches to their lives.

During the final weekend of the festival , I had a chance to talk with three members of Lilith—Jacira Melo, Silvana Afram, and Marcia Mierele—about their work and their impressions of the Cocina.

Liz Kotz: What are the most important issues for you in your work? How do you see your work as related to the women's movement in Brazil?

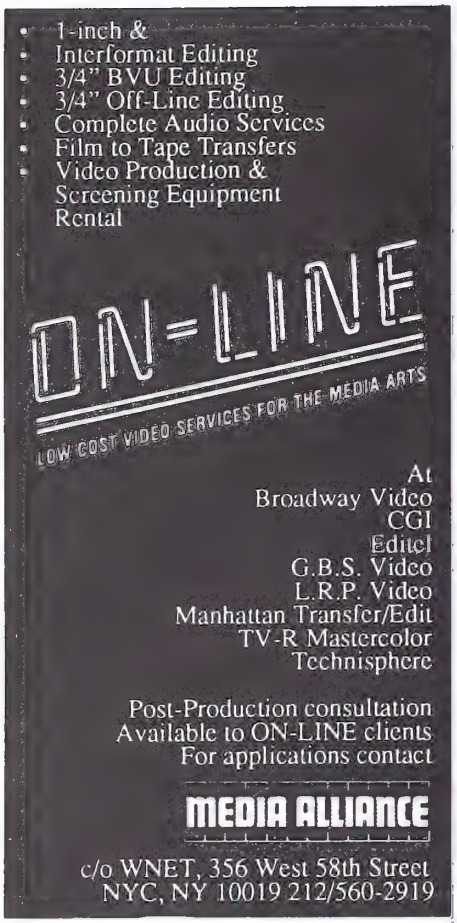
Silvana Afram: Right now, the feminist movement in Brazil is very active, very organized around health issues, which is an area of great political importance. We have developed work around these social issues—prostitution, health, violence against women, women and work, childcare, these kinds of things. In my opinion, it is very important now to develop projects about love, especially love between women.

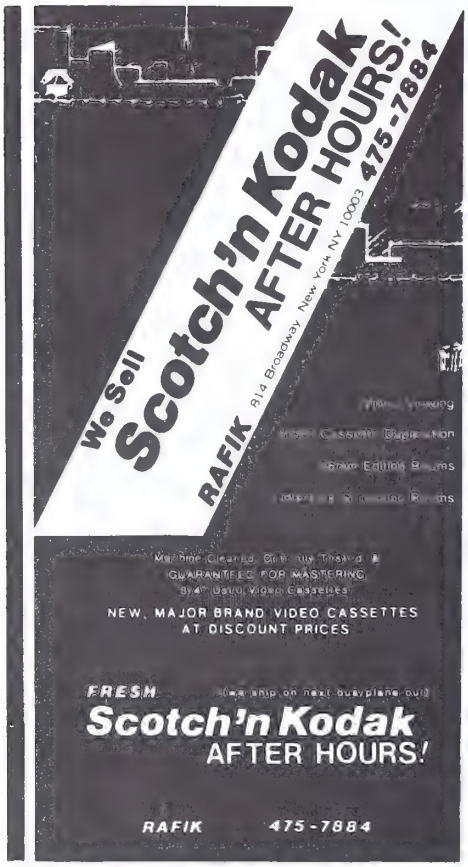
LK: In the women's movement in the U.S., this has been a very controversial subject—the issue of representations of sexuality in general and in work by women. How has this question been raised in Brazil?

Jacira Melo: I think that in Brazil, women, especially women in the feminist movement, are trying to start a serious discussion around the questions of what pornography is and what eroticism is. We perceive differences between the two. Right now, there are new issues. For instance, I don't think we can talk about sexuality now without talking about AIDS. The only work we have done on sexuality has been *Feminino Plural*, where we included interviews with many women. I think we arrived at a very profound and varied assortment of views on and questions about sexuality, exploring this subject in depth.

LK: The videos from Brazil shown here strike me as quite different in style and in form that those of other Latin American countries. What have been the major influences on your work?

SA: I think that the main influence on our work is always television—we are from a generation that grew up with TV, always watching TV since we were kids. You can't negate that kind of influence, especially in a place like Brazil, where TV is very powerful and diffuse and where the level of technical quality—with stations like TV Globo—is very high. Everyone who works in video—women, independent producers, everyone—are very aware of this. We aren't making TV like what you see on TV Globo, but it's impossible to ignore





this influence, this influx of images.

Marcia Miereles: I think that as video producers, we are very concerned with the problem of how to make programs that explore important political questions—important cultural questions—which are also attractive to look at, visually stimulating, with good sound, hard-hitting, and also emotionally-involving. It's a question of how to do this, how to make video inside of what is already there.

I don't think that video has a standard pace or an established form. In Brazil we are trying to develop forms for video, working in many different genres. People do a lot of documentary work, but there is also a lot of fiction work, video art, and experimental work. However, many of the works screened [at the Cocina] have a pacing, a rhythm that is very slow.

LK: For me, a North American who has also grown up with television, some of the videos like those from Nicaragua were too slow-moving. My attention span is too short. I think for a public that has been so influenced by television, it is necessary to find ways other than straight documentation, straight presentation of material.

JM: I think it is very important to play with the media and explore its possibilities. You have so much freedom with video to develop approaches and discover a rhythm that suits the material, since video has so little tradition. For example, our work *Mulheres No Canavial*, made in a rural area with women who cut cane, has a different rhythm than projects we shot in the city. It was an attempt to make a work close to the rhythm of these women's lives. They have a very different pace of moving, of talking, a different rhythm of expressing themselves. I think that these questions of pacing, language, and form means a constant search for each subject.

MM: It's hard for me to compare video made in Brazil with that of other Latin American countries, because in Brazil very little Latin American work is shown. From what I've seen here, videos from Columbia and Nicaragua for instance approach social conflicts, political issues, in a very "objective" manner. I think that even in the documentary work in Brazil there is a search for greater subjectivity, to work on how people experience the things that happen.

JM: The Nicaraguan video on prostitution [*Rompiendo Cadeñas*] bothered me—I have a very deep connection to this issue. Much of the work that I've done—*Beijo Na Boca*, the earlier film *Mulheres da Boca*—is with prostitutes. That tape scared me a little because it is made so much from this "objective" stance, without subjectivity, in a tape that is about the oldest job in humanity, which didn't start with capitalism and won't fade away with socialism. What scares me is this discussion as a "social problem" without looking at the nuances, the ambiguities. And it leaves out what for me is such an important part of documentary, which is emotion, the feelings people have about their lives.

LK: What struck me about the Nicaraguan piece, especially in comparison to your work made up of interviews with working women, is that—with all the material of government officials talking about prostitution and about the social problems prostitution represents—no prostitutes appear in the tape to talk about their lives and about what it's like for them. It's a completely different way of treating the subject. But then, you are independent producers, while the Nicaraguan piece is made by a government agency.

JM: And one with a very clear ideology about this subject. But for us too this problem arises when we do contracted work, when we do videos funded by government agencies.

LK: What foreign video work gets shown in Brazil?

MM: Video from the first world, mostly. Stuff from the U.S., like Nam June Paik. Even with women's film and video, we know much more the work by German women, French women, U.S. women, than work by other Latin Americans. But this is starting to change. With the growth of the ABVMP [Brazilian Association of Popular Video] there has been much more communication. Right now, they are doing an exhibition of popular video and clandestine video from Chile. This is a very new thing for us.

LK: How does your work relate to the popular video movement in Brazil?

JM: In Brazil, popular video is fairly similar to a lot of the tapes shown here. It is very concerned with political content, with documenting events such as strikes, meetings, and demonstrations. This work generally does not experiment very much with the form. But it is a very active movement and things are changing. The producers are very interested in learning more, getting access to more complicated technology. Like many people here, at first people doing popular video in Brazil just had cameras, then very basic editing systems.

MM: Right now independent producers have a great desire to organize. We have an organization now, the São Paulo Association of Independent Producers, who are organizing to get more work in television. They already work in commercial production, making training tapes, doing the festival circuit, but it is very hard for these producers to work in television, which is a very closed system. We are now beginning to have regional stations. There are no cable systems since it is too expensive. But there are pirate stations in Rio and in São Paulo—the democratization of the airwaves.

LK: Where is your work shown?

JM: Well, for example, *Feminino Plural* was a project made with an educational TV station and was offered to all the educational TV stations in the country. It's already been shown in more than 10 states, which is fantastic. It was watched by a fairly sizable audience. The other works were shown in small videotheques and by women's groups. But, in my opinion, the small videotheques have no impact. We need a more structured, more stable places.

LK: Could you talk a bit about the role of women in cinema and video in Brazil, especially in comparison with other countries in Latin America?

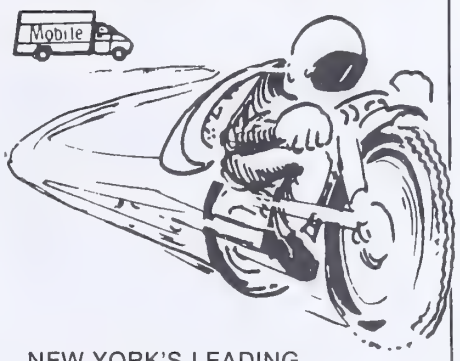
JM: There are more than 100 videotapes made by women in Brazil, which is a lot. I don't know if there are more women working in cinema in Brazil than in other parts of Latin America. In the Brazilian Video Festival, which takes place in São Paulo and is the most important video festival, 30 percent of the work shown in VHS was produced by women, with technical services, camera, editing, etc., for those tapes done by women. In the three-quarter-inch works as well a large number were directed or written by women, although less of the technical work was by women. In professional TV, there are very few women who are producers and assistant producers. I think there was a report that said that fewer than one percent of the technicians in TV were women. Now there is one female cameraperson in Rio, and she just started this past year. Women work more in independent video, in popular video. And these are mainly young women. Everyone in Lilith is under 35.

Liz Kotz works for Adair and Armstrong, a San Francisco production company, and writes on film and video. She is currently assisting in the organization of Cine Acción's upcoming Women of the Americas film and video festival.

FIVF TAPE LIBRARY

The FIVF Festival Bureau has established a tape library of members' current works to expedite screenings for upcoming film and video festivals. Members interested in depositing their work in the library should contact: Kathryn Bowser, Festival Bureau director, FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012, (212) 473-3400. 1/2" and 3/4" tapes will be accepted.

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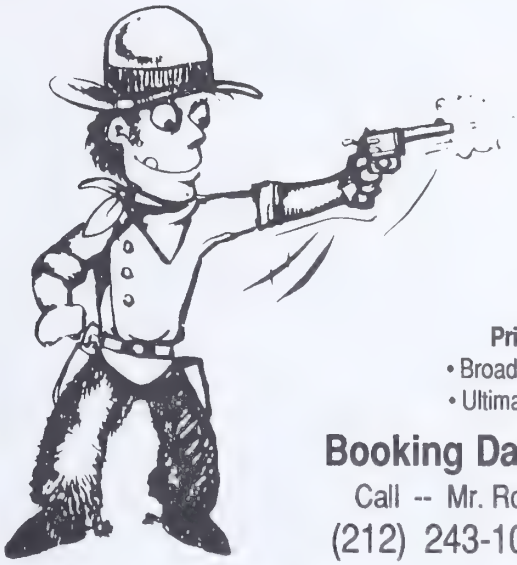
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LIKE A ROLLING STONE: MEMORIES OF TVTV



CBS's Mike Wallace is interviewed about covering President Nixon's "coronation" at the the 1972 Republican Convention, the subject of TVTV's *Four More Years*.

Photo: Marita Sturken/ Courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix

Martha Gever

With all the talk about the constraints placed on independent videomakers who want to get their work on public TV that goes on these days, the Museum of Broadcasting's retrospective of some tapes by the Top Value Television collective (better known as TVTV) from what now seem like the good old days of the WNET TV Lab promised an opportunity for historical reflection. The midtown Manhattan institution provided the event and the tapes, as part of a larger program of WNET productions. Panels, convened on the evenings of March 29 and 30 to discuss TVTV and the development of alternative television documentaries—along with portions of the audience—contributed the nostalgia.

At one point during the second evening's discussion Adrian Jenik, a young media activist who works with the Paper Tiger/Deep Dish TV collective (which can be linked historically to the revolt against mass media industries that spawned groups like TVTV and informed much of the independent media activity of the early seventies), commented on the pessimism that nostagia can breed and made an ardent case for the vitality and viability of alternative video using public access cable channels. "This is not a nostalgia trip," Skip Blumberg, one of the empaneled TVTV veterans, countered, "and I am offended."

In this context, however, both Jenik and Blumberg had a point. Anyone who was in grade school or younger during the halycon days of reel-to-reel portapaks and the techno-hip publication *Radical Software* and has heard tales of the giddy goings-on of groups like the Videofreex—a number of people in the audience at the museum would qualify—might expect some inspiration or encouragement from their forebearers. Instead, they were repeatedly told by David Loxton, the WNET producer who headed the TV Lab in those days and the panel moderator, that the accomplishments of TVTV were unrivaled, that since TVTV disbanded circa 1976 no comparable work has been made. Anyone skeptical about the cultural revolutions that supposedly occured in "the sixties" (which lasted well into the seventies) might question the purpose of such statements. Still, the presence of Blumberg and the other ex-TVTVites on the panel—Wendy Apple, Maureen Orth, Hudson Marquez, Tom Weinberg, and Megan Williams—sparked a series of observations about the tapes made by the collective as well as supplying information about their organization—or disorganization—their working methods, and their relationship with the TV Lab.

After listening to the various reminiscences and anecdotes of the group it was possible to agree with Loxton in one sense: A casually constituted operation (he called it a "unit") along the lines of TVTV would be difficult to replicate in the late eighties. Another young producer in the audience asked what seems to be the inevitable question at such gatherings: "Where did you get your funding?" The panelists chuckled and then explained that the costs of the kind of production they were engaged in were exponentially lower than what is considered practical or even possible for video production today, if just as labor-intensive. *Lord of the Universe* (1974), an early TVTV documentary about then-popular Guru Maharaji, for instance, was made for $34,000. With a $230,000 grant from the TV Lab, TVTV guaranteed delivery of five one-hour programs to WNET. And this supported crews of 20 to 40, who shared lodgings, slept on mattresses on the floor, and often subsisted on a diet of peanut butter. They noted that collective members often lived on $50 to $100 a week while working on a tape.

Loxton was correct again when he outlined the difference between public television then and now. "PBS had only just been formed [in 1972]. I was able to simply say, 'TVTV is preparing a 90-minute tape on someone interesting [Abbie Hoffman, as it turned out]. Please reserve a 90-minute slot.' It wouldn't happen today." He also recalled that following Richard Nixon's virulent attack on public television, which resulted in the zeroing of money for public affairs, TVTV's tapes, bearing the imprimatur of the TV Lab were the only public affairs programs available on PBS at the time.

The material produced by TVTV was both representative of portapak production taking place around the country in the early seventies and the culmination of scattered efforts to harness portable video equipment for purposes counter to network television or the mainstream press. At various junctures in the discussion several panelists uttered the word "counterculture" to explain the context of their activities and their particular journalistic style. But they consistently dodged any association with the radical politics of the era, equating TVTV with *Rolling Stone* rather than, say, New Left political groups. Blumberg made this comparison, as did Orth, who joined TVTV after writing an article about them for the rock 'n' roll tabloid—an emblem of the "counterculture" if there was one. And Apple remarked, "We didn't believe in objectivity.... We wanted to be like Hunter Thompson." Toward the conclusion of the second evening Blumberg added, "We were just as critical of the left as the right in our tapes."

This assertion, however, was disproved by some of the clips screened as an introduction to the discussions—works like *Four More Years* (1972), which was shot at the Republican National Convention, and *Gerald Ford's America* (1975)—as well as other TVTV productions. Although these tapes lack any overt political analysis of their subjects, the sympathies of the producers are neither apolitical nor prone to criticizing the left. If anything, they adopt many of the tactics of sending up the sacred cows of the "silent majority" favored by left-wing politicos of the period.

Likewise, the attempts by the panelists to distance their style and interests from the cinema verité tradition—voiced by Marquez and seconded by others on the panel—seemed strange.

Again, the disavowal is not sustained by the tapes, which differ significantly from work like the legendary *An American Family* PBS series and the films of Frederick Wiseman (the two examples used by the TVTV panelists) but still employ many of the tropes common to cinema verité, such as sustained hand-held shots with sync sound observing the minutiae of social events and interactions. The TVTV tapes also exhibit the lived-in quality of the work of cinema verité pioneer Richard Leacock and his colleagues, and it's probably no coincidence that the final TVTV production was a tape about Bob Dylan's *Hard Rain* concert tour, which provokes associations with the concert films of D.A. Pennebaker, another prominent proponent of the documentary verité style. To deny the connection with this tradition only confuses those interested in the development of documentary forms and minimizes an understanding of influences.

When the conversation shifted to the present, the TVTV vets generally attested to the importance of their experiences with the group in relation to the work they have done since. Apple, who worked as a producer for *The Wilton North Report*, noted that her style of inquiry as well as the look of her recent work is similar to the TVTV tapes. Blumberg could easily link his numerous video documentaries on quirky cultural phenomena to his work with TVTV. Megan Williams explained that after a long absence from the world of media production, she recently produced a documentary film on education for deaf children, *Language Says It All*, which received an Academy Award nomination this year. Perhaps the career of Tom Weinberg, a founder of the Chicago Editing Center—now the Center for New Television—adheres most closely to the tradition of TVTV. Weinberg continues to produce *Image Union*, a weekly program of independent work aired by Chicago public TV station WTTW. Too bad Michael Shamberg, one of the principles in TVTV, was unable to attend the event. Shamberg, who some years after leaving TVTV produced *The Big Chill*, might have explained his transformation from prophet of "guerrilla television" to Hollywood deal-maker.

Come to think of it, *The Big Chill* isn't a far cry from what transpired at the museum on those two evenings—without the sexual dramas of course—with the corpus of TVTV figured as the corpse. The tape samples and some of the reminiscences created an aura of a bygone era of anarchic activism, while the people speaking were successful professionals with thriving careers. In pondering the possible ways to reconcile the critique of media politics embodied in many collective video projects of the early and mid-seventies with their current status as artifacts from a pre-Betacam world, it may be helpful to remember that TVTV was invented by the publishers of *Radical Software*, including Shamberg, who ran an item soliciting interest in the project. Prior to that, in 1971, Shamberg wrote and edited the book *Guerrilla Television* in conjunction with Raindance. In *Guerrilla Television* Shamberg spells out a particular brand of media philosophy, a conceptual scheme drawing heavily on then-fashionable theories of cybernetics and the revolutionary potential of technological expansion. And in his introduction, he clarifies the book's title: "The use of the word 'guerrilla' is a sort of bridge between an old and a new consciousness. The name of our publication *Radical Software* performs a similar function. Most people think of something 'radical' as being political, but we are not. We do, however, believe in post-political solutions to cultural problems that are *radical* in their discontinuity with the past."

As anyone involved in the cultural debates about media of those times—or anyone who has plundered the video archives to explore their record—can attest, the growing sophistication and availability of technology has not produced "radical discontinuity with the past," and "post-political solutions" are as much a chimera now as then. But one useful result of the Museum of Broadcasting discussion about TVTV was that it underscored the need to understand *continuity* and *political* solutions in relation to television and how it is used. Although the term "guerrilla television" seems to have been revived recently, the specific circumstances that gave birth to TVTV no longer exist. But the need to break the mold used to cast conventional television—especially public television—documentaries is just as important today as it was in 1972, and that work goes on.

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CAMCORDERS COMING UP

Barton Weiss

Just when I thought I had a grip on the elusive consumer camcorder world, things have changed again. As an engineer friend of mine says, "There's isn't one box that has everything and never will be." Since the publication of "Super VHS: Super Great or Super Hype" in the April 1988 issue of *The Independent*, a few things have come to light.

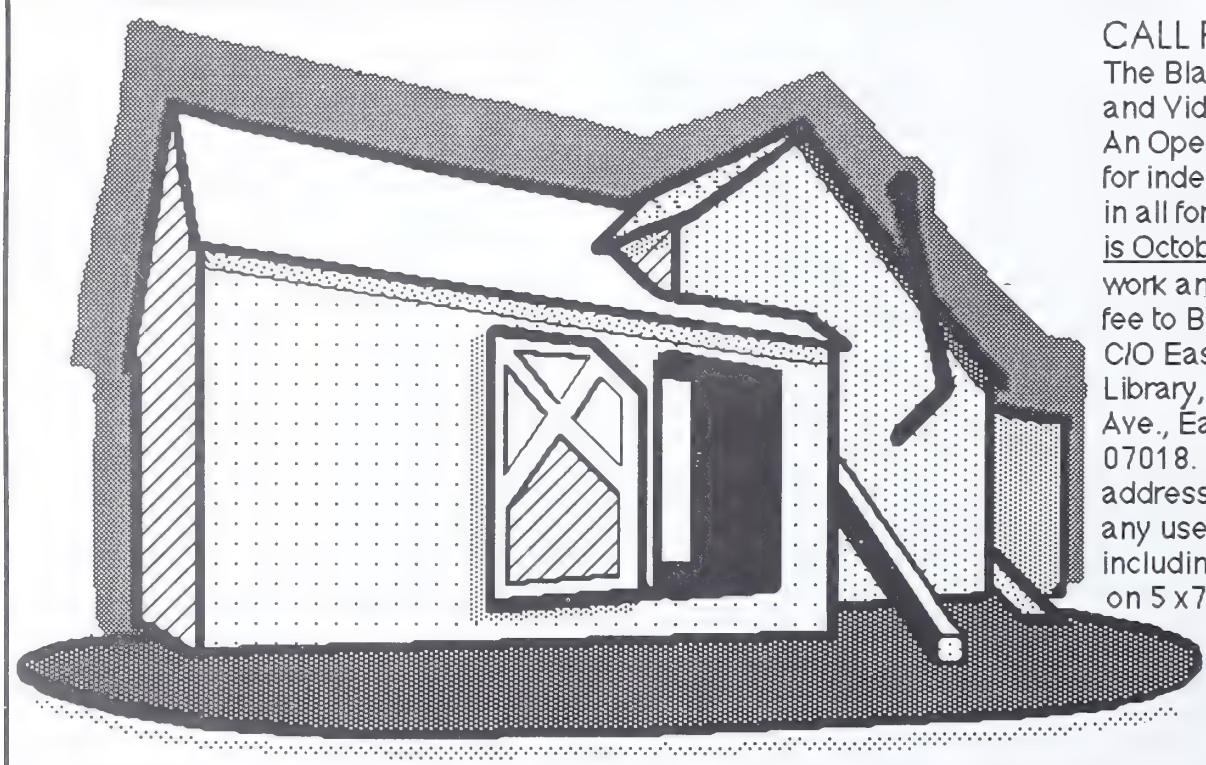
Starting with the most important: Sony's Beta ED Cam (with over 500 lines of resolution) is better than expected, and the company promises to have it in stores by early 1989. Side by side, it knocks S-VHS' socks off. The camcorder will have a 10-to-one lens, hi-fi sound, and—most important—an interchangable lens mount, either a bayonet or a "C" mount, so you can put on your Switar or Angenieux. Before getting too excited, the list price on this "prosumer" camcorder will be between $5,000 and $10,000, a rather hefty price tag for a comsumer item with all the built-in headaches that brings.

Other new Sony stuff includes a new 8mm camcorder, the CCD 220 (which updates the 110), with a 380,000 pixel chip and digital hi-fi stereo sound. There's also HI Band 8mm, which is the S-VHS version of 8mm. In the same way S-VHS is to VHS, this new format shifts the frequency, separates the luminance and chroma and has the same compatibility problem as S-VHS. Very few commentators think this one will be around for long. Its main advantage is the Y/C cable (for an explanation of this technical innovation, see my April article).

JVC is coming out with two S-VHS cameras: one consumer and one professional. The GHFS 1000HU consumer model will be out by the time you read this. Both will have hi-fi stereo sound. The consumer model will also have nine tiny heads, so that it can record in the slow ep mode, which is practically unusable for anything serious. Because the pro model doesn't have extra heads, the image is cleaner.

Finally Panasonic Industrial is coming out with a new professional camcorder which does *not* have hi-fi sound but does have a better lens. And that's not everything. I read in the June issue of *Video* magazine that Panasonic has come out with a consumer camcorder with a built-in lens stabilizer called the Electronic Image Stabilization System. It's now only on their PV 340 consumer *non*-S-VHS camcorder, but it should be incorporated in the professional and S-VHS series relatively soon.

Barton Weiss is a film/videomaker, programmer, and the director of the Dallas Video Festival; he teaches at the University of Texas at Dallas.



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The Black Maria was Thomas Edison's experimental film studio. The Festival is a non-profit organization making major cash awards with support from The New Jersey State Council on the Arts, The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, The Alton Jones Foundation & N.J. Institute of Technology.

HOME VIDEO CASE JOLTS THE MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRY

Robert C. Harris

If an owner of a song grants a film company the right to use the song in a movie for exhibition in motion picture theaters or on television, can the film company sell videocassettes of the film, including the song, without obtaining additional rights? Recently a federal appellate court in California, in the case of *Cohen v. Paramount Pictures Corp.*, said no, sending shock waves through the motion picture industry.

In 1969 Herbert Cohen, copyright owner of the song "Merry-Go-Round," granted a synchronization license to a film company to use the song in the film *Medium Cool* and to exhibit the film in theaters and on television. Rights in the film were thereafter assigned to Paramount, which later produced and sold videocassettes of the film. Cohen claimed that sale of videocassettes of the film containing his song infringed the copyright on the song and instituted a lawsuit. The lower court ruled in favor of Paramount, but that decision has now been reversed by the appellate court.

The court began its analysis of the issue by examining the language of the synchronization license. The document began by granting the film company the "authority...to record in any manner, medium, form or language the words and music of the musical composition...with *Medium Cool*, all in accordance with the terms, conditions and limitations hereinafter set forth...." A subsequent paragraph provided that "The...license herein granted to perform...said musical composition is granted for: (a) The exhibition of said motion picture...to audiences in motion picture theaters...(b) The exhibition of said motion picture...by means of television..., including 'pay television,' 'subscription television' and 'closed circuit into homes' television...." A later provision of the license reserved to the owner of the song all rights except those granted to the film company. The contract contained no express reference to videocassettes.

Paramount argued that videocassette exploitation was permitted by virtue of the clause in the contract authorizing the filmmaker to record the song "in any manner, medium, form or language." The court rejected this argument on the grounds that this language was qualified by the further language of the clause that such authority to record was to be in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth later in the agreement, and that the later provisions expressly limited presentation of the film to two media—theater and television. Unless videocassette production falls within either of these two categories, it was unauthorized, since a later provision in the agreement reserved to the copyright owner all rights not granted by the license.

Paramount then argued that videocassette display was the equivalent of exhibition by means of television. The court disagreed, differentiating television exhibition and videocassette use:

> Though videocassettes may be displayed by using a television monitor, it does not follow that, for copyright purposes, videocassettes constitute "exhibition by television." Exhibition of a film on television differs fundamentally from exhibition by means of a videocassette recorder ("VCR"). Television requires an intermediary network, station, or cable to send the television signals into consumers' homes. The menu of entertainment appearing on television is controlled entirely by the intermediary and, thus, the consumer's selection is limited to what is available on various channels. Moreover, equipped merely with a conventional television set, a consumer has no means of capturing any part of the television display; when the program is over it vanishes, and the consumer is powerless to replay it. Because they originate outside the home, television signals are ephemeral and beyond the viewer's grasp.
>
> Videocassettes, of course, allow viewing of a markedly different nature. Videocassette entertainment is controlled within the home, at the viewer's complete discretion. A consumer may view exactly what he or she wants (assuming availability in the marketplace) at whatever time he or she chooses. The view may even "fast forward" the tape so as to quickly pass over parts of the program he or she does not wish to view. By their very essence, then, videocassettes liberate viewers from the constraints otherwise inherent in television, and eliminate the involvement of an intermediary, such as a network.
>
> Television and videocassette display thus have very little in common besides the fact that a conventional monitor may be used both to receive television signals and to display a videocassette....Playing a videocassette on a VCR does not require a standard television set capable of receiving television signals by cable or by broadcast; it is only necessary to have a monitor capable of displaying the material on the magnetized tape.

The court also asserted that television exhibition didn't encompass videocassette reproduction since the parties acknowledged that VCRs for home use were not invented or known in 1969 when the license was granted and therefore could not have contemplated that such rights were to be included in the grant. Since the license did not expressly include videocassettes, and all rights not granted were reserved to the owner of the song, such rights remained with the owner of the song.

The court distinguished two cases in which other courts had construed licenses to include the right to exploit videocassettes. In one case, involving the movie *American Graffiti*, the court noted that the language in that grant included the right to exhibit, distribute, exploit, and market the motion picture "by any means or methods now or hereafter known." Such broad language precluded any need in the agreement for an exhaustive list of specific potential uses. Similarly, in the case involving Mickey Rooney films, the grants included the right to exhibit the films "by any present or future methods or means" and by "any other means now known or unknown." The court construed these contracts, in comparison to the one at issue, as expressly conferring the right to exhibit the films by methods yet to be invented, including videocassettes.

As evidenced by the two cases distinguished by the court, resolution of the issue as to whether videocassette rights were granted in a contract in which they were not expressly mentioned (i.e., whether expressly granted or expressly reserved) will depend upon the particular language contained in the contract. Where language is ambiguous or unclear, the court will examine the contract to search for the probable intent of the parties. However, particularly in cases involving technological developments that were unknown or not contemplated at the time the agreement was signed, the parties may not have had the same intent, or may have had no intent at all concerning the issue in dispute.

In this situation, the *Cohen* court made a restrictive interpretation of the contract language. It could have taken a broader approach. The late professor Melville Nimmer, in his leading treatise on the law of copyright, wrote that courts could follow one of two possible approaches, which he termed the "core" approach and the "penumbra" approach. In the more restrictive "core" approach, only those uses that fall clearly within the meaning of the categories mentioned in the agreement would be deemed granted. This is the approach that the *Cohen* court apparently followed. Under the more liberal "penumbra" approach, those uses which arguably bear some relationship to the "core" uses and could reasonably be encompassed therein would also be deemed to be included in the

grant, an approach which Professor Nimmer commended. Pertinent to our issue his treatise stated:

> [I]t should follow that a grant of the right to exhibit a motion picture by "television" in its unambiguous core meaning refers to over-the-air television broadcasts, but in its ambiguous penumbra includes any device by which the motion picture may be seen on television screens, including cable television and videocassette uses.

While the language employed in other film contracts will of course differ in many cases, and other courts may adopt a more liberal construction of grants of this nature, the significance of the *Cohen* ruling should not be minimized. The *Cohen* court, sitting in California, is probably the most influential court in the motion picture industry, and its holding could affect thousands of contracts in which the language is unclear as to whether videocassette rights may be exploited, as well as whether use is permitted in other media that may be developed in the future and which were not expressly mentioned in the contracts. Film companies will be forced either to renegotiate such agreements to clarify their rights or face the spectre of legal claims and liability.

The decision would appear to be primarily relevant to grants of copyrightable material, such as pre-existing music (as in the *Cohen* case), underlying literary materials, such as books purchased for film adaptation, and pre-existing stock footage. The decision would also be relevant to distribution licenses in which a film company has authorized a distributor to exploit the film in certain media, and there may be ambiguities concerning whether or not videocassette rights (or other uses that may hereafter be invented) were included in the grant.

With regard to music synchronization licenses currently issued, the general practice of most music publishers is to charge separate fees for each of theatrical, free television, cable television, and home video usage, or alternatively a special rate to purchase rights in all media. Unless home video rights are separately purchased or rights in all media are acquired as a buy-out, home video rights are not included as part of the synchronization license.

The *Cohen* decision should not have as strong an impact on contracts with performers, screenwriters, directors, and composers hired to write original music, as in most cases the film company acquires all rights, including copyright, in the results and proceeds of their services, or engages these individuals on a work made for hire basis, whereby the company owns the copyright. Further, with respect to more recent agreements where union or guild collective bargaining agreements are involved, videocassette exploitation is authorized, although certain payments must be made by the producer to the union or guild member for such use.

The independent film/videomaker should be concerned with contractual language concerning videocassettes in contracts he/she enters into from two perspectives. First, with regard to the acquisition of copyrighted property, he/she should make sure that videocassette rights are expressly included in the license agreements for such materials. Second, if the film/videomaker wishes to reserve home video exploitation rights in a distribution agreement, he/she must be careful to reserve such rights expressly.

Further, as evidenced by the *Cohen* case involving videocassettes, since all media that may hereafter be created by new technology cannot be contemplated at the time an agreement is signed, it behooves the film/videomaker to try to include in agreements in which he/she is acquiring copyrighted material broad language that the film incorporating such material may be exploited in any media, whether now known or hereafter developed or invented. Conversely, where the film/videomaker is licensing rights to exploit the film to third parties, he/she should fight inclusion of such broad language in the license, and instead should attempt to include restrictive language that all rights in the film not specifically granted in the agreement are reserved to him/her.

Robert C. Harris is an attorney with the New York City firm of Leavy Rosensweig & Hyman, which specializes in entertainment and copyright law and represents independent film producers.

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Le PAF*

The Changing French Audio-Visual Landscape

*Paysage Audiovisuel Français



Jacques Deschamps's *The Bedazzled Eye*, a film about a blind photographer, was coproduced by Le Sept and the National Audiovisual Institute, which are trying to develop a new market for "high quality culture."

Photo: Evgen Bavcar

Roy Lekus

If you are the type of world traveller who cures homesickness by turning on the TV in your hotel room, France is for you. Thanks to the overwhelming presence of shows like *Starsky and Hutch*, *One Life to Live*, *Dallas*, *Dynasty*, *Miami Vice*, *Mike Hammer*, and *The Return of Mike Hammer* on all six channels, the French audio-visual landscape—le PAF—looks a lot like home. (In 1987 *Le Monde* counted more than 60 U.S. series running on French TV.) Further enhancing the resemblance, even the proverbial nonprofessionalism of French television is gone, replaced by well-timed interruptions of programs by ads. If these last aren't yet quite as pervasive as they are in the United States, remember that Rome wasn't built in a day. It's all quite new on these shores.

If you tune in late enough, however, most likely to FR-3 or to Canal Plus (the only pay channel, with nearly two million subscribers), you may see some independent work, perhaps even a piece by a U.S. film- or video-maker. Both Jennifer Fox's *Beirut: The Last Home Movie* and Zbigniew Rybczynski's *Steps* aired this spring. Some independent producers in the U.S. may know about Canal Plus, which—alone among French networks—actively pursues innovative work by sending a representative to the Independent Feature Market in New York City every year and which hired Jean-Luc Godard as "special counsellor on film" and commissioned his personal history of cinema series. If you're really savvy, you know that La Sept (the seventh) is the new "culture" channel. But don't go looking for a channel 7. There won't be one until, presumably, late 1988, when the TDF-1 satellite goes into orbit, and no official premiere date has yet been announced. In the meantime, La Sept squats on channel 3, one of the two remaining public networks (along with channel 2, called Antenne-2), during the late evenings hours.

With four privately owned channels, two public networks plus another ready to go, along with rumors of an all-music channel in the works, French television has undergone radical changes in the four years since it entered the market economy.

□ □ □

In 1957, when broadcasting took hold in France, there was one channel for the entire country, TF-1. By 1983, there were three. And that was that. All three were public stations, funded by a special user's tax. The entire operation was grouped together in the National Office of Radio and TV (ORTF), housed in the Maison de la Radio. Built in 1963, this structure became a sort of landmark—an ultra-modern (for its time), circular building across from the Eiffel Tower, which was used by Godard to show a futuristic Paris in Alphaville and by Fellini in *The Clowns*.

ORTF was long considered a typical and terrifying example of French bureaucracy; at one point a head count revealed 12,000 administrative and clerical people for 250 program makers. Sensationalist tabloids sold issues with stories about reporters who pretended to work at ORTF, set up shop in their offices, and proceeded to spend six months using the office phone in order to prove the incompetency of the entire system. But ORTF's original sin was that it never severed the umbilical cord to political power. Unlike Britain, where the Independent Broadcasting Authority was set up at the



***Beirut: The Last Home Movie*, by U.S. independent Jennifer Fox, aired last spring on La Sept. It chronicles three months in the life of an aristocratic family who try to maintain their lifestyle in war-torn Beirut.**

Courtesy filmmaker

same time as the BBC, France never made any provisions for an independent governing body, and ORTF remained under the direct control of the Ministry of Information, the government's propaganda unit.

Between Charles DeGaulle's takeover in 1958 and Mitterand's victory in 1981, the political power in France was dominated by Gaullists or, at least, Gaullists were included in every governing coalition. Each successive version of Gaullism promised to liberate television from the Ministry of Information, but as John Ardagh, *London Times*' correspondent in France, wrote in his authoritative study *The New France*, "No government dared part with so valuable a weapon." In his incisive chapter on TV, "The Darker Face of Gaullism," Ardagh curtly remarks that "in political debate and news coverage there had never been pretence at parity." In 1968, for example, during the first days of the Sorbonne riots, the government forbade any television coverage whatsoever, whereas newspapers and commercial radio stations mentioned little else. A strike of television producers and journalists ensued, followed by collective bargaining for a new, autonomous status for TV. This dream was stillborn, however. Dozens of prominent journalists were fired, and, ideologically speaking, business as usual was quickly reinstated.

The first real mutation in French TV came in 1974 under Liberal President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing (in France, the Liberals support free enterprise and advocate reductions in state intervention in business affairs). ORTF was disbanded, competition between the three channels was encouraged, and the users' tax was distributed according to ratings. At the same time, supplementary revenues from advertising were introduced. These changes caused an uproar on the Left, since commercials and competition symbolized television à l'américaine—that is, a lowering of standards and a catering to the most crowd-pleasing formulas. However one-sided, the monolithic ORTF and its mystique of public television quality à la BBC was alive and kicking.

When Mitterand was elected in 1981 there was still no separate governing body for broadcasting. Since his first government included representatives of the French Communist Party, the conservative opposition went so far as to predict a Communist takeover of TV. In fact, just the opposite happened. One of the first acts of Mitterand's Socialist government was the creation of the Haute Autorité (High Authority), an institution which achieved neutrality and real authority among broadcasters as an impartial regulator of public affairs on television after some skirmishes with Socialist powerbrokers and with certain partisan journalists.

On the other hand, the Socialists did to the still-steadfast public television system what everyone of the Left had long feared the Right would do. In 1984, they introduced privately-owned stations for the first time in France: first Canal Plus, the pay channel; then, in 1985, La Cinq and Metropole-6, financed exclusively through advertisements and sponsored programming. In his announcements concerning the inroads allowed commercial interests, Mitterand correctly argued that if the government didn't ordain one or more private channels according to regulations that would guarantee certain standards, uncontrolled stations would soon be broadcasting via satellite anyway. The creation of private stations could thus be construed as a bulwark against the invasion of foreign programs via satellite. In a country with a strong tradition of broadcasting as "public service," the reshaping of the television landscape was definitely *en marche*.

When the conservative Gaullist-Centrist coalition returned to power in 1986, leaving Mitterand as a relatively powerless figurehead, its first act was to immediately dismantle the Haute Autorité, which they considered a symbol of Socialist evils. The Right then set up a new governing body, the Commission Nationale pour la Communication et les Libertés (CNCL). Like the Haute Authorité, its members were chosen from seemingly impartial bodies such as the Senate and the High Court. Through subtle changes in the nomination process, however, the CNCL placed television under conservative political power's wing once again. But, almost from the day it was conceived, it has been under fire from all sides, including some of its members, who are infuriated by the board's laissez-faire reactions to numerous violations of the charter that regulates the private stations, which was jointly framed by the government and the CNCL itself. Just as Mitterand was being reelected last May, one member of the CNCL—the journalist who became famous for his TV "interviews" with DeGaulle over the years (i.e., giving the General his cues)—was officially indicted for taking bribes from radio stations sympathetic to conservatives. As a symptom of the overtly partisan character of CNCL, this minor incident focused public attention on an institution Mitterand had vowed to abolish if reelected. During the recent campaign, he pledged to reinstate some equivalent of the Haute Autorité and sponsor a constitutional amendment making the existence of such an independent body a permanent institution.

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A paralyzing feature of traditional, public French TV—prior to privatization—was the scarcity of outlets for programs. With only three networks, the centralization of decision-making as well as almost all program production in Paris, and a program day that typically began at noon and signed off between 11 p.m. and midnight, the amount of programming possible and the plurality of voices on French television was severely limited. In addition, a strong directors' union composed of veterans of the heroic early days of television succeeded in limiting access by new directors, unless they



Production of the children's series *The Adventures of Kiko* exemplifies the questionable results of FR-3's decentralization policy.

Courtesy filmmakers

worked their way up within the system. Certainly, with the inception of video and the expanded availability of 16mm equipment in the seventies, films and tapes were being produced in Marseille, Grenoble, Le Havre, and elsewhere. Strong media arts centers were established outside Paris and these continue to exist. However, they remain marginal enterprises with virtually no access to television. No network, public or private, was ever really decentralized or democratized.*

In the early eighties, the Socialists attempted to decentralize the public station FR-3, which was supposed to produce local programs. In fact, the programming decisions for FR-3 are made in Paris, then executed throughout the country. The farcical results of this policy might be illustrated by the production history of *The Adventures of Kiko* (1987/88), a lovely 26-part children's series made by Monique Dartonne and Michel Kaptur, independent producers who previously never worked for French TV. *Kiko* was shot by an FR-3 crew from Bordeaux in the southwest, edited in Lille in the north, and mixed in Strasbourg near Germany. Even the titles and the cues for airing were done in different cities. So much for decentralization.

What about diversified voices? In 1984, the Socialists coined the term "program industry," thereby underlining the increase in the volume of production France would need to supply a mixed public/private TV system. On paper, at least, the greater number of channels would inject a financial shot in the arm in French media production. This concept also entailed an image of concentration of production entities, in order to achieve a critical mass capable of competing with American and Japanese producers. And this scenario was played out on a relatively small scale in costly attempts to develop the animated film industry. Theoretically, the sheer increase in the number of broadcasting hours on more channels with varying profiles would also produce a demand for the products of myriad smaller companies.

When Conservative Jacques Chirac was elected Prime Minister in March 1986, he redefined the rules by selling public TF-1 to private owners. After competitive bidding, concrete merchant Francis Bouygues and publishing baron Robert Maxwell were awarded 50 percent share of the channel, with the remaining 50 percent sold to public stockholders on the Paris stock exchange. At the same time, the CNCL withdrew the Socialists' licenses for private La-5 and Metropole-6 and granted new ones; another European media czar, Silvio Berlusconi, and publisher Robert Hersant became part-owners of La-5, and Compagnie Luxembourgeoise de Telediffusion, Lyonnaise de Eaux, and the Havas ad agency now run M-6. The contracts for the latter two channels were awarded on the basis of numerous legal provisos that established quotas for French programming rather than foreign investment in French production (as the Socialists had favored), the percent of documentaries broadcast, and so on. Of course, during the competition for those contracts, potential investors swore to the cultural, public service nature of their intentions. In the two years since these contracts were granted, however, little they promised has materialized. While the CNCL has protested and called La-5 and M-6 to order, its power to impose sanctions is limited by loopholes in the law—not to mention the owners' ability to postpone paying any penalties that might be imposed. As a result, at certain times of the day, you can zap through all six channels and only find bonafide U.S. reruns.

Thus, the sudden opening up of new TV outlets, while statistically a godsend—and, in the long run, healthy for European telecommunications barons if not for French culture—has become a cut-throat competition for ratings. Instead of promoting diversity on the airwaves, it has had the opposite effect of homogenizing programs. The quantitative increase has in no way resulted in the introduction of minority or regional voices. Documentaries, outside of nature programs, have practically disappeared.

* Cable is slowly being introduced in a number of cities. After two national funding initiatives in 1986 and 1987 to commission programming for the cable system (a windfall for independent producers), a market economy now dominates. Given the small number of subscribers, no consequential production is initiated for cablecast anymore.

Privately-Owned Television

TF-1: France's first television channel, established in 1957. Originally a public station, TF-1 was sold to private owners in 1986.

Canal Plus: A pay channel and the first privately-owned station in France, Canal Plus was introduced in 1984.

La Cinq: Established in 1985, La-5 is financed through advertising and sponsored programming.

Metropole-6: Like La-5, M-6 was initiated in 1985 as a commercial station.

Public Television

Antenne-2: A public network, funded by a special user's tax.

FR-3: One of the two remaining public networks, FR-3 is supposed to produce local and regional programs.

La Sept: The new culture channel La Sept was officially approved in 1985. Not yet a separate channel, Le Sept's programming temporarily shares time on FR-3.

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Beyond the all-too-familiar schedule of syndicated U.S. TV shows, however, lie the few alternatives available to independent media producers—including La Sept, the still ephemeral channel. Yet another of Mitterand's pet projects, the exploratory mission for La Sept was undertaken in 1985. Upon taking power, Chirac's conservatives didn't discard the idea; they simply changed the people in charge (to be fair, they chose eminent people from broadcasting, several of whom, like Thierry Garrel, were instrumental in developing innovative policies elsewhere). And long before the inception of La Sept, during the past 15 years other entry points into the system have proved congenial to independent makers of single programs: INA, the National Audiovisual Institute; FR-3 for shorts; M-6 for music videos, as of 1985; and Canal Plus for video art, since 1984. Finally, representatives of A-2 sit on the National Cinema Center Short film commission, which reads hundreds of scripts for short fiction or documentary films each year, funding anywhere between 60 and 100, and A-2 pre-purchases a few of these.

INA was created in 1974 with the mission to promote research into new forms of expression in television. Jean-Pierre Gorin's *Routine Pleasures*, for instance, was funded in part by INA, as was Godard's six-part *Sur et Sous la Communication* (*Above and Below Communication*). Raul Ruiz made several pieces for or in collaboration with INA. So did Robert Kramer. Under Giscard's 1974 reorganization, INA had no direct access to broadcast time. Rather, INA approached the three channels with programs or, in some instances, coproduced with them. In reality, these deals required endless negotiations—and a need for programs to fill the summer schedule—in order for INA to get a chance to show its work on TV. Under Chirac, any obligation towards INA of the part of the TV stations evaporated. It's possible that Mitterand's reelection will reinforce INA's position once again.

Whatever the future holds, over the past 10 years INA was the organization that independents approached. Today it is La Sept. In an article published in *Cahiers du Cinema* (December 1987), Claude Guisard, head of production, creation, and research at INA, summarized the effects of the recent changes within French television on the organizations that support independent, innovative media production:

> In the last two or three years, we found partners abroad, in order to develop a new market I would call "high-quality culture," already the path taken [in the U.K.] by Channel Four, and the direction given to La Sept. It was absolutely necessary to invent La Sept, but to my mind, that we needed La Sept proved we'd lost the battle with the other, "mass audience" channels. In today's context, to reserve a space especially for truly creative work is to the public good; without it, there might not be any at all. INA's problem is to maintain an identity while presenting new talent, by whatever means, whoever the partners and whatever the constraints.

Guisard's remarks are clearly illustrated by two tapes made by Jacques Deschamps, an independent who previously made both dramatic shorts and documentaries but, like Dartonne and Kaptur, had produced nothing directly commissioned by one of the broadcast channels. Deschamps' method in making *La Ville d'Hugo* (*Hugo's City*) was unusual. Deschamps visited Prague alone, as a tourist, taking along a video 8 camera and an audiotape recorded by Hugo Jacubek, a refugee friend who lives in Paris and is unable to return to his homeland. The program's soundtrack is a personal guided tour to the streets, apartments, and people Hugo used to know. Deschamps simply followed the guide, filming everything and everyone his cassette player invited him to. The program was produced by INA in 1986 and shown

La Sept

President: Georges Duby (an eminent historian of the Middle Ages)

La Sept has invested approximately $100,000,000 in production since its creation. It buys or coproduces about one-third of its project budget and has no in-house production. Policymakers at La Sept have stated that they prefer to have working relationships with a number of small-to-medium sized production companies rather than a myriad of individual ones—a practical possibility in a centralized environment such as France.

Feature films: Director, Marie-Françoise Mascaro

By the end of 1988, La Sept will have contributed financing to 60 theatrical features, as well as 330 hours of televised dramatic series or made-for-TV films.

Documentary: Director, Thierry Garrell

Approximately 1,000 hours of documentary programming will have been produced or purchased by the end of 1988. This includes French or foreign "classics": Chris Marker, Jean Rouch, Frederick Wiseman, Johan Van Der Keuken, a series of portraits of filmmakers from the sixties, *Cinèastes de Notre Temps*; plus dozens of portraits of important figures in science, sociology, philosophy, architecture, the arts, music, etc.

Youth: Director, Arielle Naudé

A new department that considers itself as the first television unit designed for the entire youth of Europe.

Purchase of theatrical movies: Director, Hélène Mochiri

Two hundred films have already been purchased, from classics to moderns, French and foreign.

La Sept coproduces on a regular basis with Britain's Channel Four, RAI in Italy, and ZDF in West Germany.

Address: 35 Quai André Citroen, 75015 Paris, France.

Canal Plus

Shorts and video art: Alain Burosse, Patrice Bauchy

Theatrical feature programming: René Bonnell

Documents and news magazines: Catherine Lamour

Drama: Anat-Birnbaum

Address: 78 rue Olivier de Serres, 75015 Paris, France.

INA

Direction de la Production, de la Création et de la Recherche: Claude Guisard

Address: INA, Avenue de l'Europe, 94360 Bry-sur-Marne, France.



Richard Copans and Marc Huraux shooting *Bird Now*, a documentary on legendary saxophonist Charlie Parker. Huraux successfully turned to international sources for production funding, finding France a finite marketplace.

Courtesy filmmakers

in one of INA's slots on public TF-1 (since privatized). A year later, Deschamps repeated his experiment in *The Bedazzled Eye*, one of France's entries at the International Public Television Screening Conference held in Phildelphia last May. This film is about Evgen Bavcar, a Yugoslavian philosopher living in Paris who lost his sight at age 11 and now takes still photographs—portraits—with a wide-angle lens that translate his memories of the visual world and his aural impressions of his everyday life. INA coproduced again, this time with La Sept. Where was it shown? On channel 3, naturally.

INA, with or without La Sept, is not the only place independents can and could work. Canal Plus, the oldest private channel (1984), understands that a variety of audiences exist or can be created. Without attempting to establish itself as a specialty channel, Canal Plus divides its airtime among radically different kinds of programs, sometimes reserving a large slice of its schedule for special events: for example, a night of films on art (some acquired and others commissioned from independents) and a night of shorts, programmed in concert with the Festival du Court Metrage in Clermont-Ferrand, the biggest event of its kind in the country. A new addition to the Canal Plus roster, *Avance sur l'Image*, shows some impressive contemporary international video. And recently they organized a contest for programs on the theme of "the city" in collaboration with La Bande à Lumière, an organization of documentary filmmakers created in late 1986 to combat the absence of serious independent documentaries on television.

At first, Canal Plus produced almost nothing, although it prepurchased some not-yet-completed programs. It has since become involved in feature coproductions. The channel put money into films by Raymond Depardon and Eric Rohmer, as well as those by a number of independents who are as yet unknown outside France. But the country's only pay channel also shows a lot of sports programs (including U.S. professional football). Bernard Bloch, an independent producer, has been able to survive by supplying them with sports documentaries with a social background, such as his in-depth portrait of Italy featuring the soccer-player Maradonna. In true independent fashion, Bloch spent months working on the subject.

Another factor in the French TV production scene is a leftover from the days of ORTF, the Société Française de Production (SFP). Still the heavyweight studio supplier for both public and commercial TV, SFP is a mammoth, bureaucratic organization that no government has dared dismantle for reasons of tradition and fears of creating unemployment. In recent years, because stations began to look elsewhere for less costly services and in an attempt to secure more employment for its crews, SFP developed certain projects on its own initiative or contributed its services in exchange for coproduction credits. Although U.S. independent filmmaker Jill Godmilow was able to take advantage of these policies when working on *Waiting for the Moon*, the SFP's bureaucratic sluggishness makes it an unlikely partner for most independents.

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One of the virtues of the Socialist government after their electoral success in 1981 was that they imprinted on French minds an understanding of the international character of the economy and economic exchange. Never has there been so much information and commentary in the press about the economic status of the rest of the world. When the Socialists added the term "production industries" to the French vocabulary, they hoped to impress on the public's mind how vital it was that domestic film and television production be actively encouraged. But, to date, the producers of French-made television shows haven't mastered the tried and true appeal of U.S. entertainment fare. *Chateauvallon*, a French equivalent of *Dallas*, was designed, produced, and sold to captive markets such as French-speaking North Africa, but did poorly elsewhere. Other than the language factor, one reason for their failure is their comparative unwillingness to invest in pilots and re-writes.

Independents, too, have assimilated the notion that France is a small marketplace with finite funding limits, as well as finite limits to expansion. Some have sought international funding for their projects. A successful recent example is Marc Huraux' *Bird Now*, an elegant documentary about Charlie Parker shown at the 1988 Berlin and San Francisco Film Festivals. The first production of a Belgian company, Hengameh Panahi's Celluloid Dealers, shot entirely in English in the U.S., *Bird Now* was coproduced by La Sept and prepurchased by Channel Four. Another example comes from Les Films d'Ici, a Parisian company. A minority producer on *Bird Now*, Les Films d'Ici is currently finishing Robert Kramer's *Road Number One* for La Sept. Kramer's first U.S. shoot since *Milestones*, the film will be a series in several parts, with additional financing from RAI, the major Italian TV company.

A study of television documentaries, commissioned last year by the National Cinema Center and conducted by La Bande à Lumière, provides a provocative footnote to the situation of independent film- and videomakers in light of the complex developments presently occuring in French broadcasting. One of the study's authors, Yves Jeanneau (also a producer at Films d'Ici), concluded that independent documentaries get made because author/promoters impose their desires: they convince those in their immediate environment and raise the initial funding. More often than not, part of the total budget is lacking when production commences, and the decision to begin production is the result of an artistic-economic-anarchist line of reasoning, irreducible to any known equations or to a strictly professional outlook. Fortunately, the advent of La Sept is beginning to modify the pessimism implied in Jeanneau's observations.

Roy Lekus, originally a New Yorker, is an independent producer living and working in Paris. His films have received extensive festival distribution in France and been aired on national television. He is a member of the production company Avidia Films, Paris.

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CAPITAL GAINS: THE 1988 FILMFEST D.C.



Souleymane Cisse's *Yeelen (Brightness)*, based on a mythic Bambara tale, was part of a 10-year retrospective of African films included in Filmfest D.C.

Courtesy Filmfest D.C.

Pat Aufderheide

Filmfest D.C., which weathered its second season this April as a noncompetitive festival, is establishing itself as a local institution, a victory in a town less known for its cultural than its political appetites. The festival is run by two people with experience in local habits and expectations: Marcia Zalbowitz, chief of the audio-visual department of the city's public library system, and Anthony Gittens, whose Black Film Institute series at the University of the District of Columbia is well-respected. Their choices reflect a sensitivity to various local constituencies, including children (for whom several well-attended programs were held), as well as the result of international film-shopping trips. This year's special programs were devoted to Swedish cinema, in a tribute organized in conjunction with Swedish state cultural organizations (the tribute followed the smash success of the Swedish *My Life as a Dog*, which debuted at the festival last year), and African cinema, in a 10-year retrospective organized by Howard University professor Francoise Pfaff.

Filmfest's debut year shocked cynics long used to lackadaisical local attendance at international, independent, and avant-garde film programs. Most showings, at theaters and museums around the city, sold out. This year the programmers eagerly seized on that success, nearly doubling the number of films to 75 features and 40 shorts, and extending the festival to 12 days.

Perhaps the festival grew too quickly, because glitches were common this year: no-show films and filmmakers, films shown with the wrong lens, rescheduling without warning. Seemingly, the press office was the last to know of many changes, and the "hospitality suite," located in a Capitol Hill hotel housing many of the filmmakers and far from many screenings, was anything but. Still, the festival this year adequately filled most houses, though not typically selling out. And it fulfilled its promise to present high-quality international cinema that hasn't gotten distribution—and in most cases, probably won't.

The selection was truly international. Among the festival's strongest choices this year were films from South and East Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. They presented not only unusual glimpses into other cultures but vigorous styles that appeal—without catering—to international tastes. For instance, veteran Indian director Shyam Benegal's *The Essence* offers an accessible, culturally-rooted look at traditional weavers and the promises—mostly false—of modernity for them. Palestinian Michel Khleifi's lushly mounted *Wedding in Galilee*, Tsui Hark's dazzling revision of Hong Kong cinema, *Peking Opera Blues*, Tian Zhuangzhuang's *Horse Thief*, from the studio with the hottest reputation in China today, and Japanese Kazuo Hara's shocking documentary *The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On*—all heralded in recent festival outings in the U.S.—impressed and sometimes surprised local audiences. Out of the mediocre crop of films produced in Latin American last year, the festival harvested several of interest, particularly Mozambican-Brazilian Ruy Guerra's *Fable of the Beautiful Pigeon Fancier*. This latest film from a celebrated *Cinema Novo* director features a script by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, a stunning performance by Claudia Ohana (*Erendira, Malandro*), and a tight directorial grip that keeps the fantasy from becoming fey.

Noteworthy among the festival's international selections was the Soviet work, reflecting *glasnost*-era opportunities in exhibition (more than in production). Alexander Askoldov's *Commissar*, the 20-year-banned humanistic tale of a pregnant military commander and the Jewish family she is billetted with during Civil War years, arrived with Askoldov in attendance. Here, as at the San Francisco Film Festival, the director continued his

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trouble-making tradition, lambasting *glasnost*-era leaders in the film world for not being daring enough. Georgian Teimuraz Bablouani's *Migration of Sparrows*, made in 1979, provided as much a punchy pleasure in its character-rich storytelling as the better-known Sergei Paradjanov's *Arabesques on Pirosmani* provided disappointment. Astonishing in its technical and aesthetic approaches was the work of animator Yuri Norstein, who was present to introduce, among other works, his uncompleted, masterful *The Overcoat*. Norstein's skill—his best-known work is the feature *Tale of Tales*, a wistful twist on Russian folklore set during World War Two—gives cinematic graphics the stature of high visual art.

The festival also showcased U.S. independent work, highlighting films by local directors. Robert Gardner, a sometimes D.C. resident, showed his second feature (after the well-received *Clarence and Angel*), *King James Version*, which has powerful elements, particularly in children's roles. But as the director himself admits, it bears the scars of a difficult birth—years in the making, death of a principal funder, horrific money troubles, many script revisions. *The Uncompromising Revolution*, a documentary essay by local filmmaker Saul Landau, whose other work has chronicled the Cuban revolution and Fidel Castro himself in a positive light, was presented in rough cut. In this version, the film juggles partisan support for the Cuban government with Landau's personal criticisms of Fidel's style of leadership. As a result, the film appears to be more in dialogue with itself than with the audience. Other independent work shown included *Radio Bikini*, the ingeniously composed and sharply critical documentary by Robert Stone about A-bomb testing in the Pacific and the U.S. government's propaganda campaign surrounding it, as well as the soberly informative *Rights and Reactions: Lesbian and Gay Rights on Trial*, by Phil Zwickler and Jane Lippman.

The 10-year retrospective "Evolving African Cinema" single-handedly justified the entire festival. African film expert Pfaff (author of *The Cinema of Ousmane Sembene* and *Twenty-five Black African Filmmakers*, both Greenwood Press books), with the help of grants and logistical support from the United States Information Agency, selected 21 works from 13 countries, including North African nations. The resulting overview came from established and emerging directors, in documentary and fiction, in both short and feature lengths (the last crucial, since annual film production is low and precarious). Some eight directors attended, and two panel discussions featured African and Black American critics and filmmakers. Both sessions offered a forum for one of the oldest and thorniest questions in Third World cinema: cultural nationalism in cinematic aesthetics and practice.

Diversity within trends was evident on screen. For instance, several films celebrate traditional culture, without turning tradition into a tourist commodity. Distinctive for its deft, gentle com-



The controversial *The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On*, by Japanese filmmaker Kazuo Hara, has renewed debate on the question of when a documentarian should intervene with the violent actions of his or her subject.

edy is musician-actor-director Umban u'Kset's *Ntturudu* (1987), the first feature film made in Guinea Bissau. The film develops typical African themes—generation gaps, tradition vs. modernity, and country vs. city—with sly humor.

Social-drama films exploring—usually without neatly resolving—personal experience of social crisis provided a baseline throughout the retrospective. *Love Brewed in the African Pot* (1980), a deliberate and sometimes melodramatic film by Kwaw Ansah from Ghana, confronts class conflict in the marriage of an upwardly mobile girl and an auto mechanic. Cameroonian *Les Cooperants*, the 1982 film by Arthur Si Bita, pits well-meaning urban students against the realities of village life. *Les Cooperants* daringly flouts Cameroonian authorities by making its villain a corrupt ex-civil servant, while it eclectically borrows from international police thriller traditions. (The film was only released in Cameroon several weeks before Filmfest, because financial mismanagement in the government agency funding the film had left Si Bita unpaid. He would not release the film until the bill was settled.)

In *The Choice* (1986), set in Burkina Faso, Idrissa Ouedraogo gives an African view of the drought crisis. Widely regarded as slow and simplistic by Africans and North Americans alike, the feature was a weaker entry than Ouedraogo's shorts, particularly the imagistic *Issa the Weaver*. Malian Souleymane Cisse's *Yeelen (Brightness)*, distributed by Island in the U.S., is an easy candidate for that over-used word "masterpiece." A mythic tale grounded in Bambara tradition, it follows a boy-prince's quest for spiritual strength, which culminates when he is forced to battle his father, the incarnation of the dark forces of the spirit.

An ample selection of shorts in the retrospective provided a chance to spot new talent and sample a variety of styles. Senegalese David Ika Diop's *Poete de l'Amour*, like Sarah Maldoror's *Aimé Césaire: The Mask of Words*, is a well-mounted and unpretentious documentary. Diop's subject is his renowned father, a poet of negritude and independence. The Guadeloupan Maldoror, long resident in Africa, focuses on an old friend and supporter, the great poet and activist Césaire. Tanzanian Flora M'Mbugu Schelling's *From Sunup*, while well-photographed and focusing on African women, lacks directorial vision and takes the shape of the U.N.-type social-issue film about Third World poverty. *The Marriage of Mariamu*, a Tanzanian film by Ron Mulvihill and Nangayoma Ngoge, has the flavor of an educational docudrama, with the unusual message that people should trust indigenous medical authorities often labeled "witch doctors." Young Cameroonian Jean-Marie Teno's *Yellow Fever Taximan* and *Hommage*, both assured and original in distinct styles, suggest a director worth watching.

Clearly, African filmmaking still has the strong links to independence struggles that it was born with. Exiled African patriots and eager students in Paris in the fifties put together the first short films, which debuted with the first independent governments. But African cinema has remained largely an individual struggle, with sporadic help, and often hindrance, from the state. Between 1980 and 1984, only 68 feature films were produced in 13 countries (half from Nigeria and Cameroon). Still, there are now distribution cooperatives and film festivals, including the biennial FESPACO, held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. (Its status is in question, however, since the coup deposing President Thomas Sankara. His death may have ended an era of vigorous support for pan-African, culturally nationalist cinema.)

The rhetorical consistency of African cinema appears far more coherent from a distance than it did in conversations and in panel discussions with African filmmakers. Veterans like Ousmane Sembene and Med Hondo have often called themselves modern *griots*, or bards. But the interpretation of that mandate is as diverse as the filmmakers. Many aim to produce works that can entertain and be understood by broad international audiences (and, with luck, bought by powerful distributors in the U.S. and Europe). *La Vie Est Belle*, a raucous comedy vehicle for Zairian

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pop songster Papa Wemba, offers such unabashed entertainment. Codirector Ngangura Mweze said, "My film is influenced by Western models, yes, but I never met an African group that didn't like it. What's an 'African' film? Cinema is not a language that exists in traditional African culture. And this business of the griot—what a griot is may differ from one part of Africa to another. In Kinshasa, for instance they don't exist." Mweze is proud that audiences who came to watch "an African film" stayed to watch "a film"—thus recognizing, in his opinion, their common humanity.

During the festival, Souleymane Cisse frankly stated, "The cinema is universal for me." He acknowledged fierce debate on the issue of cultural nationalism, but commented, "This kind of question arises, because African cinema is so new. The day when African cinema reaches the level of other world cinemas, we won't be talking those terms." Cisse argued that African cinema is best served by high-quality films with a wide appeal. "When *Yeelen* was presented at Cannes [where it was a prize-winner]," he recalled, "the big surprise was having an African film with high production values, and a distinct style. The film accomplished something for African cinema, which was treated with the status of world-wide cinema."

Given the rarity of programming like this, it would have been useful to have a separate mini-catalogue or at least a section within the festival catalogue with more detailed information on the films and filmmakers, introduced by an essay. The visiting filmmakers were booked for a packed schedule of touring events, leaving no unscheduled time for interviews or individual business meetings, something several of them (and several journalists) complained about. Finally, it is too bad that so much work went into putting together a retrospective of films shown only once in one city.

Filmfest D.C. executive director Gittens emphasizes that the festival does not strive for a Third World focus. The festival's initial strength has been its showcase of films from beyond Europe and North America, recognizing this work as a legitimate element of world cinema. Filmfest D.C. has shown that such programming gets not only critical respect but audiences. It plays the invaluable role of laying a foundation, so that emerging work can be presented within a context, not merely as exotic spice or the exceptional work of an *auteur*.

Pat Aufderheide is a senior editor for In These Times *and teaches in the School of Communication at American University.*

OBSCURE OBJECTS OF CINE-DESIRE: BOSTON'S RE:VISION FESTIVAL



Archival footage of arctic hunts, train travel, missionary schools, and warfare in Africa serves as the basis for Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci Lucchi's *From the Pole to the Equator.* These two Italian filmmakers discovered the archives of an early cinematographer and rephotographed and hand-tinted the footage for their haunting feature documentary, seen in the Re:vision festival in Boston.

Courtesy Film Forum

Karen Rosenberg

When I covered the first Re:vision festival for the *Boston Globe* in 1986, codirector John Gianvito asked me, "How did you find out about us?" Actually, I'd read a short blurb about a proposed exploration of contemporary film in the back of a brochure on extension courses at the Massachusetts College of Art.

The idea for this festival arose when filmmaker Nancy Sugarman, who was teaching at the college, asked Gianvito, then on the MIT faculty, how to obtain works by Chantal Akerman. The idea of pooling information and institutional resources seemed a good one, and with Boston Film/Video Foundation's collaboration, a seven-film festival of avant-garde works was launched.

Re:vision is now it its third year and both the number of its offerings and its popularity have grown enormously. Boston and Cambridge have suffered from the declining exhibition of foreign and experimental works. (The legendary Orson Welles movie theater closed after a fire in 1986 and apparently won't reopen; Off the Wall, which featured animation and other shorts, became a victim of rising rents; and the list goes on.) This festival fills a perceived need of Boston-area audiences for something other than safe film art. True, the Brattle, a commercial rep theater, and nonprofits in the city schedule some unconventional works almost year-round.

Re:vision can be considered an extension of the normal activities of these various exhibitors, and it remains a collaborative effort. This year the participants were the Brattle, Harvard Film Archive, the Institute of Contemporary Art, and the MIT Film/Video Section. Screenings were held in all locations, and one side benefit of the festival is that it introduces audiences to facilities they may have never visited before (next year, the Museum of Fine Arts will replace MIT). Such noncompetitive relations among film exhibitors are gratifying. Perhaps another happy spin-off of the conservative eighties is that the few who really care about film realize that they need each other's help and support.

This collaboration began around the problem of obtaining one of Akerman's films, and each year the festival has shown one of her films. This year's was the 1978 *Les Rendez-vous d'Anna*, in which an itinerant filmmaker named Anna listens to the monologues of various lonely individuals but seems most connected to a woman who is never shown on the screen. Because Re:vision is dedicated to bringing often-obscure films and videos to public attention, the pooling of experience is essential to its success. "Only about seven of the 50 films in this year's festival were ordered and booked the normal way, from a distributor's listing," Gianvito told me. The incredible amount of work that went into obtaining the other films proves that this festival was a genuine labor of love. A $24,000 grant from the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities by no means compensated the festival curators for the time they spent. For instance, tracking down who owns a subtitled print can be a major chore. Shuji Terayama's 1985 *Farewell to the Ark*, a comic tale of a chasity belt, played at the Brattle in Japanese with French subtitles to the surprise of everyone, including the programmers. Perhaps because this was in Cambridge, no one walked out or even complained.

Festival highlights included two little-known works by Ingmar Bergman. *The Blessed Ones* (1986) is a dramatization of a novel by Ulla Isaksson that was made for television. The success of the filmmaker lies in his ability to keep us guessing who is the deranged partner in a love relationship: first it's the man, then the woman, and finally we begin to comprehend the concept of *folie à deux*. *Karin's Face* (1985), a 14-minute film, uses extreme close-ups and intertitles to draw the viewer's attention to telling aspects of photos of the filmmaker's mother. (The sound track consists only of piano music, and the written text is in Swedish, but handouts with English translations were provided.) As an older woman, she is no longer photographed alone. "Now Karin

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disappears more and more into the collection of family pictures," reads the text. So we learn that, in this family and perhaps in the culture as a whole, a woman is worthy of solo portraits only in her youth. As far as others were concerned, Karin's individual life ended before her death.

A visit by Raul Ruiz and a four-film tribute to him raised the status of the Re:vision festival among movie-goers and perhaps among distributors, too. The presence of a director obviously lends glamor that audiences crave, even when they don't know what to ask him. "Have you ever heard of the French writer Roland Barthes?" asked one man at Harvard Film Archive after the screening of Ruiz's *The Hypothesis of the Stolen Painting* (1978), a playful parody of intellectuals who seek rational explanations even for the mysterious and the absurd. In this country, the movies and their makers are not generally considered on the same plane as major writers and their books. The idea that Ruiz—a Chilean exile who works largely in France and is friendly with writer/director Alain Robbe-Grillet, among others—might operate in the very thick of literary life is largely inconceivable here. Perhaps a festival like this one can shake up our neat hierarchies and suggest that society can be organized in ways different from ours. But, to achieve this, one would probably need more extensive program notes about the director, which in turn requires more financial support.

Similarly, I wish that Boston-area audiences had been prepared to meet Ukrainian director Yuri Ilyenko and to view three of his films, especially the striking *A Well for the Thirsty*, made in 1965, shelved, and released in the USSR only last year. Since his works were shown in unsubtitled prints, the screenings were attended most by members of the Ukrainian emigré community. Ilyenko is best known here as the cameraman on Sergei Paradjanov's *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors* and shares many such stylistic features with his Soviet colleague as wordless, frontal tableaux. The beautifully-composed shots of *A Well for the Thirsty* impress upon the memory the idea that people have cut themselves off from nature and will pay heavily for that mistake. And there's no happy ending—conventional in Soviet films—to dissipate that warning.

A Well for the Thirsty was later shown in a subtitled print at the San Francisco Film Festival. And other films in Re:vision are making the festival rounds: *From the Pole to the Equator* (1986), which reworks Italian travel footage; the super 8 and 16mm films of the young Philippine director Raymond Red; *Yeelen/Brightness* (1987), by Soulemane Cisse, made in Mali; and Ruiz's dance film *Mammame* (1986). Since these films probably won't open commercially in Boston, it's a service to bring them to the New England area.

A few suggestions. Some of the works could be shown at least twice, so that word-of-mouth about them would have time to get out. Not all of the films were of equal interest, which might have been less true if the curators had funds to travel and prescreen all the works. (Some were shown on the recommendation of colleagues.) Twelve days (March 2-13) may be too long for a new festival in a culturally-active city, and not all the works were well-attended. Yet the few of us who watched a documentary by Jacques Rivette on *The Rules of the Game—Jean Renoir, The Boss* (1966) learned something about the history of filmmaking. The resurrecting of early films by now-famous directors like Tarkovsky's 1960 *The Steamroller and the Violin*, also fills holes in our knowledge. In other countries, such educational programming often takes place on state-run television, but our public TV rarely serves this function. More and more, festivals are acquainting us with other cultural traditions. Whether Re:vision will received the public and private support necessary to carry out this important mission remains to be seen.

Karen Rosenberg is a writer whose work has appeared in Sight and Sound, *the* Nation, *the* Boston Globe, *and elsewhere.*

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser. Listings do not constitute an endorsement & since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

ASBURY FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 7-8, NY. Accepts short films (under 25 min.) for noncompetitive weekend showcase of 16mm independent work. Program incl. about 15 films from "unknown or first-time producers whose work is not shown at the big festivals, museums or on PBS." All cats: narrative, animation, experimental, documentary, comedy. Held at NY's Fashion Institute of Technology. Format: 16mm. Entry fee: $25. Deadline: Sept. 25. Contact: Doug LeClaire, fest director, Asbury Film Festival, 21 E. 26th St., New York, NY 10010; (212) 779-9127.

ATHENS VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct. 20-23, OH. Competitive fest for video work completed in preceding yr in cats of doc, narrative & video art. Prizes total over $3000. Work completed in previous 2 yrs. Entry fees: $20-60. Formats: 3/4", 1/2", Beta. Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: Athens International Video Festival, Box 388, Athens, OH 45702; (614) 583-1330.

BUCKS COUNTY FILM FESTIVAL, Nov., PA. Now marking 5th yr, fest accepts US ind. short films (30 min. max.) in competition for $4000 in prize money & rental fees. Cats: animation, art/experimental, narrative & doc. Winning films tour 10 sites in PA & other states,

which last yr incl. IA & TX; tour lasts through May '89. Top winning filmmakers last yr were Barbara Hammer, Les Blank, Sally Cruikshank & Susan Kouguell/Ernest Marrero. Judges this yr are filmmakers Jill Godmilow & Lise Yasui & MoMA curator Larry Kardish. Work must have been completed after 1/86. Sponsored by Film Five, nonprofit filmmakers coop. Entry fee: $20 (incl. return postage). Deadline: Oct. 1. Contact: John Toner, Bucks County Film Festival, c/o Smith & Toner, 8 E. Court St., Doylestown, PA 18901; (215) 345-5663 (eve.).

CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 24-Nov. 6, IL. 24th yr as oldest competitive int'l film fest in US which programs over 100 features as well as doc, animated, short, TV, video, student & educational works to audiences of over 80,000. Work must be produced in preceding yr & features must be Midwest premiere. Awards for features in competition incl. best film, best first feature, cinematography, directing & acting. Gold Hugo (grand prize), Silver Hugo, plaques, certificates & Getz World Peace Medal awarded. Sponsored by Cinema/Chicago. Fest will also feature tribute to director. Entry fees: $100 (feature); $80 (over 30 min.); $60 (under 30 min.); $35 (video); $25 (student); $75-200 (TV). Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Aug. 25. Contact: Chicago International Film Festival, 415 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 644-3400; telex: 936086.

PRIZED PIECES FILM & VIDEO COMPETITION, Oct. 14-16, OH. 8th yr of awards program for excellence in Black TV & film, w/ cats incl. public affairs, cultural affairs, drama, comedy, children/teens, doc & Black independent producer. Entries should feature Blacks in primary roles & "enrich the understanding of Black cultures, lifestyles, histories & concerns." Entry fees: $35 (independent); $60 (commercial). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Oct. 7. Contact: Jackie Tshaka, National Black Programming Consortium, 929 Harrison Ave., Suite 104, Columbus, OH 43215; (614) 299-5355.

SAN ANTONIO CINEFESTIVAL, Nov. 4-13, TX. As one of the largest & oldest Latino film & video fests in US, this democratic showcase screens all submitted works of any genre having direct relevance to int'l Latino experience & community. Mesquite Awards presented in cats of fiction, nonfiction, 1st film/video & special jury award. Entry fee: $15. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 8mm, 3/4". Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact: Eduardo Diaz, director, San Antonio CineFestival, 1300 Guadalupe St., San Antonio, TX 78207; (512) 271-9070.

THOMAS A. EDISON BLACK MARIA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, January, NJ. Founded in 1980, fest annually presents competition for new independent works of any style, genre, or synthesis of categories. It is traditionally strong in avant-garde works & docs & looks for "aesthetically rigorous & provocative, non-commercial media artists." Awards & exhibition royalties totalling $10,000 incl. 4 Grand Prizes & honorable mention & director's choice awards. Judging completed by end of Nov. & program premieres at Thomas A. Edison Nat'l Historic site in Jan., moving from there to a nat'l showcase tour of several cities on the East Coast. Approx 40 films & videos selected. Formats: 16mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2". Entry fee: $20. Deadline: Oct. 31. Contact: John Columbus, director, Thomas A. Edison Black Maria Film & Video Festival, Thomas A. Edison National Historic Site, Main St. & Lakeside Ave., W. Orange, NJ 07052; (201) 736-0796.

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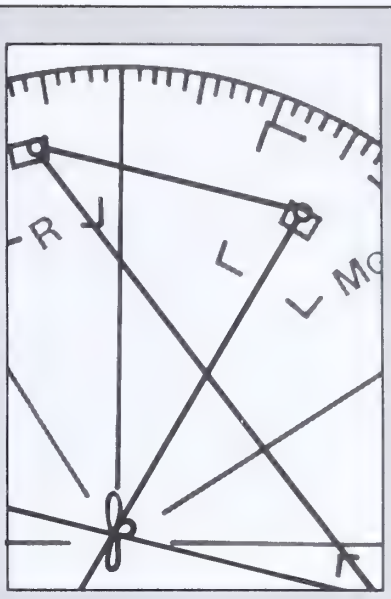
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AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL, Dec. 8-15, Netherlands. Cosponsored by the Netherlands Film Institute & other nat'l institutes, noncompetitive fest is organized to give an overview of important int'l docs while exposing them to filmmakers, distributors, TV stations & noncommercial film services. Consists of general program reviewing 20-30 docs completed in previous yr, of any length or theme, which are Netherlands premieres; tribute to work of an internationally known filmmaker; presentation of docs on theme or from school or tradition (1988 theme is *glasnost*) & seminars & workshops. Joris Ivens Award to best film. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: Oct. 1. US contact: Victor Fridman, 524 San Anselmo Ave., Suite 116, San Anselmo, CA 94960; (415) 454-8441. Send press material on film; tapes will be requested. Fest address: International Documentary Filmfestival Amsterdam, Postbus 515, 1200 AM Hilversum, Netherlands; tel: (0) 35-17645.

BILBAO INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY & SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, November, Spain. 30th edition of competitive fest which accepts films up to 30 min. Prizes incl. Grand Award of 30,000 ptas & other awards ranging from 100,000-200,000 ptas. Films should not have won prizes in other Euro fests. Doc, short & animated films. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact: Certamen Internacional de Cine Documental y Cortometraje de Bilbao, Colon de Larreategui, 37-4, Apdo. 579, 48009 Bilbao, Spain; tel: 4248698.

CAIRO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, November, Egypt. Noncompetitive; accepts feature films in official section, info section, special cinema tribute section & children's film section, which accepts entries under 35 min. Last yr 180 features screened. Entries should be Egyptian premieres produced in preceding yr. Format: 35mm. Deadline: Oct. 1. Contact: Cairo International Film Festival, 17 Kasr El Nil St., Cairo, Egypt; tel: 758979/743962; telex: 21781 CIFF UN.

FESTIVAL DEI POPOLI INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF SOCIAL DOCUMENTARY FILM, Nov. 25-Dec. 3, Italy. Documentaries which explore social, political, historical, ethno- & urban-anthropological issues, cinema, visual arts & music featured in fest, now in 29th yr. Competition & info sections incl. film & video. Prizes awarded by int'l jury incl. Best Documentary (15,000,000 lire), best video doc (10,000,000 lire), best research film (10,000,000 lire), best research video (5,000,000 lire) & Giampaolo Paoli award for best ethno-anthropological doc. Program also incl. Cinema & Rock, retro of Soviet ethno-anthropological cinema & seminar on new technologies in doc filmmaking. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Sept. 20. Appl. forms avail. at AIVF, 625 Broadway, NY, NY 10012; (212) 473-3400. Festival dei Popoli, Via dei Castellani 8, 50122 Florence, Italy; tel: (055) 294353; telex 575615 Festival.

HAVANA INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF NEW LATIN AMERICAN CINEMA, Dec., Cuba. As world's largest festival & market for Latin American film, video & TV, Havana annually attracts sizeable crowds from throughout world who come to Cuba to experience the latest in contemporary Latin cinema, along w/ African films, work by Black filmmakers in western countries & docs on 3rd world topics. Sponsored by ICAIC, the Cuban Film Institute, festival now in 10th yr & has grown considerably; several hundred films & videos shown. 1987's program encompassed 98 features in competition, 140 docs & shorts & 300 TV/video works. Program also incl. Canadian retro of features & shorts & tributes to Latin film pioneers. Coral Awards given to best films, film scripts, film posters, TV programs & ind. video productions; special awards also presented. Awards categorized for films from Latin America & Caribbean, non-Latin American & Caribbean films & films related to the regions, in cats of best fiction, doc, animation, children's, editing, acting, script, photography, sound & design. Fest provides forum for serious discussion on int'l distribution, coproductions & other important issues. Concurrent New Latin American Film Market (MECLA) last yr incl. buyers & sellers from 119 companies in 40 countries. Format: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Films not in Spanish should be subtitled. Deadline: Oct. 15. Contact: International Festival of New Latin American Cinema, Television & Video, ICAIC International Film Distributors, Calle 23, No. 1155, Plaza de la Revolucion, Havana 4, Cuba; tel: 34400/305041; telex: 511419 ICAIC CU. Info can also be obtained from Center for Cuban Studies, 124 W. 23rd St., New York, NY 10011; (212) 242-0559.

RIOFEST: INTERNATIONAL FILM, TELEVISION & VIDEO FESTIVAL & MARKET, Nov 17-26, Brazil. Marking 5th yr, fest encompasses competition, information/special screenings, market, seminars, special exhibits & retros. Last yr nearly 1000 foreign visitors attended, as well as over 2500 Brazilian journalists, dealers & participants. Program incl. over 300 features, w/ 23 in competition (Golden & Silver Tucanos awarded). Other offerings incl. week of British films; program of new US movies; section of women's films & "world's best" section. Features & shorts submitted for competition must be 35mm, fest premieres & Portuguese subtitled. Competitive sections also for TV & video. Video sections: musical, doc, fiction (under 60 min.), cartoons (under 15 min.) & experimental. Market supported 40 companies. Deadline: Aug. 31. Contact: Ney Sroulevich, Festival Internacional de Cinema, TV e Video do Rio de Janeiro, Direcao Geral do FESTRIO, Rua Paissandu, 362, 22210, Laranjeiras, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; tel: 2536712; telex: (021) 22084 ETUR BR.

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At home with the eccentric Gearhart women. Matthew Geller's television adaptation of *Split Britches*, recently seen on *New Television*, is based on a play by Gearhart relation Lois Weaver (left) and co-authors and actresses Peggy Shaw (right) and Deborah Margolin.

Photo: Jolie Stahl

Renee Tajima

Sneakin' and Peekin', a collection of three shorts by independent filmmaker Tom Palazzolo, has just been released as a one-hour home videotape by Chicago-based Facets Video. The three pieces are tongue-in-cheek documentary investigations of American sexual rituals—an America uncovered. The title tape *Sneakin' and Peekin'* chronicles the filmmaker's trip to a nudist colony's Miss Nude America Contest. *I Was a Teenage Contestant at Mother's Wet T-Shirt Contest* presents a hilarious picture of the organization of a wet T-shirt competition at the landmark Chicago night spot. And *Hot and Nasty* features the filmmaker's visit to a 1970s Chicago massage parlor. *Sneakin' and Peekin':* Facets Video, 1517 W. Fullerton Ave., Chicago, IL 60614; (800) 331-6197.

The prolific filmmaker Les Blank is on the move with documentary productions old and new. He just completed a 90-minute concert film featuring musician Ry Cooder—an ambitious piece shot with three cameras on super 16. Marc Savoy is the subject of a nearly completed work, tentatively entitled **Yum Yum Yum**, which explores Savoy's cooking, music, and thoughts on being Cajun. Meanwhile, Blank's 30-minute short *Gap-Toothed Women* was aired this spring on the Discovery Channel, and *Medicine for the Heart*, the 50-minute documentary on Serbian American music, religion, and culture in Chicago and California, was picked up by the Learning Channel for its fall *Spirit of Place* series. All of Blank's films and tapes are distributed by Flower Films, 10341 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530; (415) 525-0942.

In June *New Television* premiered a new videotape by Matthew Geller, who directed and coproduced (with Barbara Osborn) the television adaptation of **Split Britches**, based on the play of the same name. The original play was conceived and directed by Lois Weaver and written by Weaver, Peggy Shaw, and Deborah Margolin, all of whom act in the television version. *Split Britches* is about the lives of three women, based on a story about Weaver's aunt Emma Gay Gearhart and her nieces Della Mae and Cora Jane. The Gearhart women were the sole inhabitants of an old plantation from 1932 to 1949 and spend all their time in the kitchen—baking, singing, joking, and arguing about who should make the night trip over the mountains to summon the veterinarian for a sick cow. Their struggles, eccentricities, and peculiar and deep way of loving one another attempts to redefine the function of time and plot in the process of storytelling. *Split Britches* premiered on *New Television* in June and has been picked up for distribution by Video Data Bank, the Kitchen, and Electronic Arts Intermix. *Split Britches:* Everglades Productions, 4 White St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 925-1247.

Producer/director/editor/writer Kevin Brechner premiered a double feature of two new films at Pasadena, California's Wilson Auditorium. **Time River**, a 35-minute silent short, tells the story of a dying man who convinces his family to help him relive his first love. The Old Man, played by William A. Smith, is driven by his family to the ghost town of Time River, where they push his wheelchair through the deserted buildings. There, his memory flashes back to his life as a Young Man (Jon Sharkey) and his heart's desire, the Saloon Girl (Cindy Womack). *Time River* was coproduced by Manfred Moeller. In **The Planet Elpoep**, Brechner has created a science fiction adventure set 80,000 years ago when the Great Makers planted humans on earth. It tells the story of the first Earth explorer, played by Gary Campbell, who descends on another human planet to study their culture. He finds a world divided—one power controls the lush, food-growing equator, while the other controls the barren deserts of floating minerals that provides all the energy on the planet. *The Planet Elpoep* was shot entirely on video, and incorporates fantasy matte paintings. *Time River* and *The Planet Elpoep:* Time River Productions, 253 S. Rosemead Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91107; (818) 304-0080.

Apparatus Productions, the downtown Manhattan version of Columbia's Discovery Program, is now completing its debut projects: **Cause and Effect**, by Susan Delson; **Muddy Hands**, by Evan Dunsky; and **American Lunch**, by Julian Plunkett Dillon. All three are due to premiere in June at the Collective for Living Cinema and Millenium in New York City. Delson's 11-minute *Cause and Effect* explores the way actions and events in people's lives can effect each other in

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strange, unexpected ways. It looks at human interaction in contemporary life and creates links between seemingly disparate tales and images. *Muddy Hands*, a 24-minute film, tells the story of a boy named Matthew, who is haunted by his memory of another child's death. He struggles to relive his experience through play and fantasy in the face of an increasingly hostile world. During one of his frequent trips to a building site near his house, Matthew meets Anna, a strange mysterious child with whom he forms a mystical bond that forces him to confront the memory that has obsessed him. In Dillon's *American Lunch*, a cunning storyteller presents a curious tale of blackmail to two friends invited for lunch. As the story in the 34-minute film unwinds, we realize that the blackmail plot is merely a veil for a far more sinister trap involving revenge and murder. Apparatus Productions: Barry Ellsworth, Christine Vachon, Todd Haynes, 225 Lafayette St., Ste. 507, New York, NY 10012; (212) 219-1990.

The 1839 **Amistad Incident**, a mutiny on the high seas staged by Africans kidnapped into slavery, will be the focus of a new film by veteran director St. Clair Bourne. Slated to begin shooting in the spring of 1989 with a budget of approximately $4-million, the project was initiated by Ronald Bailey, the director of Afro-American Studies at the University of Mississippi and developed with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The Amistad incident is considered one of the most important court cases involving slavery. It began in Sierra Leone on the West African coast, where 53 men, women, and children were kidnapped into slavery, bought by the owners of the ship La Amistad (Friendship), and shipped to a port in Cuba. En route the Africans, led by the legendary Cinque, took over the ship and killed most of the crew. Two Spanish crewmen were spared in order to sail the ship back to Africa. But they deceived the Africans, sailing into the sun by day as ordered, but heading north and west at night. The long journey ended off the coast of Long Island on August 26, 1839, where the Amistad was spotted and seized by an American Navy brig, and the Africans were arrested for murder and mutiny. The case became a cause célebre, at the center of the controversy over slavery then raging in the United States. In the end, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Africans, who were freed and returned to their homeland. Amistad Films: 230 W. 105th St. #2A, New York, NY 10025; (212) 864-7350.

The Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles has commissioned interdisciplinary artist Tony Labat to create an installation in the museum's California Plaza facility. **David & Goliath** consists of four color monitors, a two-way mirror, two ceiling mounted projects, eight black and white monitors, and eight "security style" cameras strategically placed throughout the museum. It examines the hidden versus the exposed on both an individual and institutional level, by turning the museum's surveillance system back on itself, investigating the mechanics of how a museum operates and transforming the viewer into a participant-performer. During the summer MOCA will also present the Los Angeles premieres of Labat's installations *Big Peace*, *Munch's Parallel: The Scream*, and *Tank Top*, all of which incorporate Labat's cross-disciplinary approach, drawing from performance, video, and traditional formal concerns in art production. *David & Goliath:* Barbara Kraft, MOCA, 250 S. Grand Ave. at California Plaza, Los Angeles, CA 90012; (213) 621-1750.

Bruce Jackson and Diane Christian have just finished a 59-minute documentary about the writer Robert Creeley—perhaps the most peripatetic of American poets—who is constantly on the road giving readings, lectures, classes. In **Creeley**, the filmakers follow him to readings at Harvard and the Modern Language Association and a lecture at the Naropa Institute. There is a remarkably confessional meeting with a Temple University writing class, and in another scene, Creeley and poet Ed Dorn engage in what one critic described as "the most hilarious conversation betweeen two poets ever to make it to film." *Creeley* was funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Christian and Jackson have also begun shooting a new documentary about the civil rights attorney William Kunstler. **Kunstler** will include scenes of the attorney at work on current cases, and archival footage of his remarkable career representing such defendants as the Mississippi Freedom Riders, Martin Luther King, Lenny Bruce, the Chicago 7, Native Americans at Wounded Knee, prisoners in Attica, the Panthers, the Berrigans, and others. *Creeley:* Documentary Research, Inc., 96 Rumsey Rd., Buffalo, NY 14209; (716) 885-9777.

Animator-director Marcy Page has been earning top honors for her 12-minute short **Paradisia** at festivals around the country. Completed last year, *Paradisia* portrays the psychological rite of passage of its heroine, whose unconscious emerges and animates her surroundings, bringing statues, shadows, and reflections in a pool to life as she comes to terms with her sensual nature. To create *Paradisia*, Page used a slightly unorthodox, and time-consuming technique. The detailed pencil sketches were transferred to frosted "cels," shaded and enhanced on the top with color pencils, backpainted with various cel vinyl colors to ensure saturation, and then combined with air-brushed backgrounds. Usually the province of huge studios, *Paradisia*, a completely independent project, was made with no more than a few people working on it at any given time. However, a number of Bay Area artists contributed, including Jacalyn Kildare, Donna Fisher, Jack Fisher, and Mike McKeel. Page self-financed the production and received a completion grant from the American Film Institute as well as postproduction support from coproducer Jerry Page. The film's awards include the Silver Hugo at the Chicago International Film Festival, Best of Recent U.S. Animation at the

U.S. Film Festival, and first prizes at the Big Muddy and San Francisco International film fests. *Paradisia:* Marcy Page, 5283 Marquette, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2J 3Z4; (514) 522-4453.

Survival of a Small City is Pablo Frasconi and Nancy Salzer's new one-hour documentary about a Connecticut neighborhood before and after gentrification. Shot in South Norwalk over a period of eight years, the film looks at the political process, conflicts of interest, and achievements inherent in an urban revitalization project. *Survival* shows the challenges of forming a consensus and effecting change, and raises the question of whether urban renewal—left to private economic interests—truly benefits society as a whole. The film was picked up for distribution by Filmmakers' Library and will air nationally on the Public Broadcasting Service this August. It was funded by grants from the Connecticut Humanities Council and the American Film Institute. *Survival of a Small City:* Pablo Frasconi/Nancy Salzer, 95 Mercer St., Jersey City, NJ 07302; (201) 333-8695.

Jennifer Fox' documentary feature, **Beirut: The Last Home Movie**, is being released theatrically after winning double grand prizes for best documentary feature and best cinematography at the United States Film Festival and Grand Prize at Cinema Du Reel. An unusual film, *Beirut* is set in the war-torn city, but refuses to speak directly of war. Instead, it shows how one aristocratic family remains in the midst of the conflict in the city—although they can afford to leave—yet is somehow removed from it, as they live in elegant isolation in their ancestral home. The Bustros are Greek Orthodox Christians, members of one of the few historically nonpartisan religious groups that makes up Lebanon's population and which has not taken up arms during the present war. At the center of the family are three women, including Gabby, a sister who has chosen to return home from the United States. *Beirut: The Last Home Movie:* Zohe Film Productions, 116 Franklin St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 966-4427.

ATTENTION PRODUCERS

The "In and Out of Production" column is based on material sent by independent film- and videomakers and distributors of their work. If you have detailed information about your recently completed film or tape—or a work in production—please send it to: Renee Tajima, *The Independent*, AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, N.Y. 10012. We also appreciate black and white photos that can be used as illustration.

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3/4" VIDEO EDIT SYSTEM FOR RENT. Sony BVE-900 Editor, 2 BVU-800 decks, Sony monitors, mixer, etc. Private air-conditioned room, 24-hr access. NYC West 20s. Thomas Lennon Prods. (212) 463-9890.

VIDEO 8. Editing: color correction, FX, sound mix, transfer, duplication. Production too. Cheap. All Sony. East Village. Info: Franck Goldberg (212) 677-1679. Box 695, New York, NY 10009.

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VISA ALERT

IDEOLOGY NO BAR

Before Congress changed the law, the U.S. government barred foreign authors, academicians, journalists, artists and politicians from the United States if they were deemed to be:

- members of the communist party;
- critics of U.S. foreign policy;
- politically suspicious or undesirable;
- otherwise ideologically suspect.

During 1988 the government cannot prohibit foreigners from visiting or residing in the U.S. because of "any past, current, or expected beliefs, statements or associations."

If you are an American citizen who has invited or intends to invite a foreigner to the U.S. who might be affected by this change, please let us know.

We are monitoring the State Department's compliance to ensure that the new law is being properly interpreted and enforced. We may also be able to assist you in obtaining a visa for your guest.

Please contact:

Susan Benda, **American Civil Liberties Union** (202) 544-1681

Gail Pendleton, **National Lawyers Guild** Visa Denial Project (617) 227-9727

NOTICES

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. **The Independent** reserves the right to edit for length.

Deadlines for **Notices** will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date, e.g., September 8 for the November issue. Send notices to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Conferences • Workshops

IMAGE SUMMER WORKSHOPS on motion picture production—Location Managing, Aug. 16; Directing, Aug. 17, $150 tuition, $40 single course tuition, $25 members. Music Writing hands-on workshop, Aug. 23, $25/$15 members; Media Production Grants: Where They Are and How to Get Them, Aug. 8, $40/$30 members. Video Camera/Operation & Techniques, Aug. 24, $40/$25 members. IMAGE Film & Video Ctr., 75 Bennett St., NW, Ste. M-1, Atlanta, GA 30309; (404) 352-4225.

NORTHWEST FILM & VIDEO CENTER: Special seminar: Entertainment Law for the Layman taught by Mark Litwak, Aug. 13 & 14. Summer Media Arts Camp: The Video Story, Aug. 8-12; Animation Workshop, Aug. 1-5, offered in cooperation w/ Saturday Academy. Contact: Northwest Film & Video Ctr., 1219 SW Park Ave., Portland, OR 97205.

SALUTE TO THE DOCUMENTARY: Slated for June 1989, the National Film Board of Canada is organizing an International Symposium and Documentary Film Week in Montreal. Gathering will mark 50th anniversary of Film Board, and will examine present status of documentary film practice worldwide. Contact: Andre Paquet, Project Coordinator, NFBC, 3155 Cote-de-Liesse Rd., Saint-Laurent, Quebec H4N 2N4, Canada.

INTER-TAINMENT '88: Alexander & Associates and *Twice Magazine* will present 1st conference on interactive entertainment, Oct. 24-25 at the Vista Hotel in New York City. Contact: Sally E. Chin, Conference Coordinator, Alexander & Associates; (212) 382-3929.

MEDIA ALLIANCE ANNUAL CONFERENCE: scheduled for Oct. 27-29 in New York City, will coincide with 20th anniversary celebration of Film/Video Arts. Contact: Media Alliance, c/o WNET, 356 W. 58th St., New York, NY; (212) 560-2919.

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE: Aug. workshops for educators, students & media professionals at AFI Campus in LA—Children & TV, Aug. 1-5; Film & Amer. Ideology: Teaching Strategies, Aug. 1-5; Nuts & Bolts of Prod. Process, Aug. 8-12; Film & Language Arts: Teaching Strategies, Aug. 11-13. Workshop prices ranges from $150-550. Contact: AFI, Summer Workshops, Educ. Services, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027; (800) 221-6248; (213) 856-7725.

SOCIETY FOR PHOTOGRAPIC EDUCATION is soliciting proposals for panels & presentations for 1989 conference "Media and Society," to be held in Rochester, NY, Mar. 16-19, 1989. Submissions should be 1 page or less & be sent before Aug. 1 to: SPE '89 Rochester Conference, Box 564, Rochester, NY 14603.

Films • Tapes Wanted

THE CINEMA GUILD seeks distribution rights on new films & tapes dealing with social issues, the arts, media studies, history, biography, and other subjects. Contact: Gary Crowdus, The Cinema Guild, 1697 Broadway, New York, NY 10019; (212) 246-5522.

COMMUNITY VIDEO SCREENINGS: Downtown Community TV Ctr's Video Screening Series seeks video docs, alternative, self-empowerment, youth empowerment, advocacy, resistance, experimental works, installations & multi-media for ongoing Tues. night weekly community screenings. LESBIAN & GAY video series at DCTV is seeking video works to be exhibied in Nov. 1988. Submissions by Oct. 15, 1988. Send tapes or film-to-tape transfers w/ info & return postage to: Maria Beatty, Screening Dir., DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 966-4510.

INDEPENDENT'S COLLECTIVE SHOWCASE is seeking short films & videos for a collection of works from various artists to be distributed on video cassette. All genres considered, all formats accepted. (For screening purposes send only VHS transfers.) Any length up to one hr. Fee for selected work. Send VHS copy w/ s.a.s.e.return mailer, or for more info send s.a.s.e. to I.C.S., Box 16069, Encino, CA 91416; (818) 609-9882.

NAME GALLERY VIDEO COMMITTEE seeks independent video in all genres for its 1988-89 exhibition schedule. Accepting individual works or proposals for curated shows and installations. Also seeks independent tapes produced in b&w in all genres & formats for show scheduled late '88. Honoraria available for both exhibitions. NAME Gallery, Attn: Video Comm., 700 N. Carpenter St., Chicago, IL 60622.

NEW COMPARISON USA CREATIVE ENTERPRISES & PROJECTS UK seeks videos which examine or reflect postmodern culture & its images for a travelling exhibition entitled *Medium Cool*. Deadline for entries: Oct. 1, 1988. 3/4" U-matic format only. Send entries w/ return postage to: New Comparison USA Creative Enterprises, Box 11551, Chicago, IL 60611; (312) 772-4349 or 489-5145.

NEW DAY FILMS, a self-distribution cooperative for ind. producers, seeks new members with recent social issue docs. Appl. deadline: Sept. 1, 1988. Contact: Ralph Arlyck, 79 Raymond Ave., Poughkeepsie, NY 12601.

NEW ENGLAND FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS seeks films/tapes for *Mixed Signals* cable access series, to be shown in New England this fall. Producers must have clearance of rights. 28 min. max. Formats: 3/4", 1/2" VHS, 16mm. Fee: $30/min. Deadline: August 1. Contact: Mixed Signals/NEFA, 678 Massachusetts Ave., 8th fl., Cambridge, MA 02139; (617) 492-2914.

1990 SOUTHERN CIRCUIT: Open solicitation to film/video artists for fall '89/winter '90 Southern Circuit tour of 6 artists to 6 southern sites. Submit printed materials only, incl. resume & publicity for round 1 in selection process. Deadline for printed materials: Oct. 20, 1988. Contact: South Carolina Arts Commission Media Center, 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201; (803) 734-8696, Attn: Susan Leonard, exhibition coordinator.

Opportunities • Gigs

PARABOLA ARTS FOUNDATION is seeking interns to work in arts administration & as studio assistants w/ experimental media artists. Position hours & responsibilities flexible, depending on applicant's experience & interests. Contact: Parabola Arts Foundation, 524 Broadway, 2nd fl., New York, NY 10012; (212) 219-9695.

NONPROFIT FILM ORGANIZATION seeks part-time editor-in-chief for established monthly publication. Periodical editorial experience required. Film knowledge a plus. Send resumé and samples to: Editor, IFP/West, 309 Santa Monica Blvd., Rm 422, Santa Monica, CA 90405.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR wanted for nat'l non-profit organization promoting social issue, alternative media. Links w/ media & activist organizations desirable. Fundraising exp. necessary. Salary commensurate w/ exp. Benefits. Women & 3rd World applicants encouraged. Send resumé & letter to: Media Network, 121 Fulton St., 5th fl., New York, NY 10038.

Publications • Software

TELEVISION DIGEST, publishers of *Public Broadcasting Report*, is changing its name to Warren Publishing, Inc. and has moved to 2115 Ward Ct., N.W., Washington, DC 20037. The phone remains (202) 872-9200.

DIRECTORY OF ALTERNATIVE & RADICAL PUBLICATIONS, 1988-98: Over 300 periodicals listed. $3. Write: Alternative Press Center, Box 33109, Dept. D, Baltimore, MD 21218.

ARTISTS' HOUSING: *Creating Live/Work Space That Lasts*, by Mike Lipske & commissioned by the Design Program of the National Endowment for the Arts, is now avail. $4. Send check payable to Publishing Center to: Publishing Center, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012. Add $1 per copy for postage & handling.

SPECTACLE & EXCESS: *Wide Angle* is seeking manuscripts which consider the implications of narrative, thematic & stylistic spectacle & excess manifested in particular film & TV texts. A wide range of topics is appropriate here: from Stallone to the late work of Hollis Frampton, Fellini to *Dynasty*, Busby Berkeley to splatter movies, Leone to the Super Bowl, Eisenstein to DeMille, gothic melodrama to postmodernism. Deadline: Aug. 20. Contact: *Wide Angle*, Box 388, Athens, OH 45701.

THE FILMS OF ANDY WARHOL: AN INTRODUCTION is a free, 24-page brochure with essays by John G. Hanhardt and Jon Gartenberg, a filmography & illustrations. Published in conjunction w/ the Andy Warhol retrospective at the Whitney Museum of American Art. Contact: Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St., New York, NY 10021; (212) 570-3633.

THIRD WORLD RESOURCES: *A Quarterly Review of Resources From & About the Third World* is published by The Data Center. Incl. info on organizations, publications & AV materials. Spring 1988 issue is now available, $2.50/per copy. Also avail., an index to past issues. Contact: Third World Resources, 464 19th St.,

Oakland, CA 94612.

ART HAZARDS NEWS: Vol. II, No. 3 is a Special Resource Issue which incl. a select listing of health & safety orgs., agencies & institutions that provide services to artists in US & Canada. Special editor: Mitchell Redman. Subs: $15/yr. Contact: Center for Safety in the Arts, 5 Beekman St., Ste. 1030, New York, NY 10038; (212) 227-6220.

1988 NAMAC DIRECTORY: Available from NAMAC, 135 St. Paul's Ave., Staten Island, NY 10301; (718) 727-5593.

Resources • Funds

OPEN SOLICITATION guidelines for FY 1989 are now available. Deadlines: Sept. 9, 1988, Jan. 6 & April 21, 1989. Corporation for Public Braodcasting, 111 Sixteenth St. NW, Washington DC 20036.

PHELAN FILMMAKING AWARDS for California-born artists, regardless of current residency. Cash prizes of $2,500 to eligible artists whose body of work exhibits high artistic quality & creativity. Deadline: Sept. 16. Contact: Film Arts Foundation, 346 Ninth St., 2nd Fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 552-8760.

PHELAN VIDEO ART AWARDS for California-born artists, in recognition of past achievement in field of video art. Cash prizes of $2,500 ea. to 3 awardees. Deadline: Oct. 14. Contact: Bay Area Video Coalition, 1111 17th St., San Francisco, CA 94107; (415) 861-3282.

AFI INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER PROGRAM provides funding for narrative, animation, experimental, educational & doc projects. Max. grant is $20,000. Deadline: Sept. 15. For appl, send postcard to: Independent Filmmaker Program, American Film Institute, 2021 N. Western Ave., Box 27999, Los Angeles, CA 90027.

RISCA DEADLINES: Project Support & Mini-Grants, Sept. 1. Contact: Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, Ste. 103, 95 Cedar St., Providence, RI 02903; (401) 277-3880.

INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION FUND 1988: Sponsored by Southwest Alternative Media Project provides grants for ind. film- & videomakers residing in TX, AK, OK, KS, NE, MS, PR & US Virgin Islands. 1 appl. per person permitted. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: IPF 1988, SWAMP, 1519 W. Main, Houston, TX 77006.

SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION Grant deadline: Aug. 15 for individuals & orgs. Contact: SC Arts Comm., 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201; (803) 734-8696.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS grants deadlines for Media Arts are Sept. 1 for Narrative Film Development, Nov. 14 for Film/Video Production & Jan. 30, 1989 for AFI/NEA Film Preservation Program. Contact: Media Arts, NEA, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES: Humanities Projects in Media deadline: Sept. 16, 1988. Contact: James Dougherty, NEH, 1100 Penn. Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 786-0278.

FULLBRIGHT Grants for study abroad in film & video, appl. now avail. Deadline: Oct. 31. Contact: Institute of Int'l Education, 809 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017 or regional offices: 133 Carnegie Way, NW, Atlanta, GA 30303; 401 N. Wabash Ave., Chicago, IL 60611; 700 Broadway, Denver, CO 80203; Ste. 1-A, World Trade Ctr., 1520 Texas Ave., Houston, TX 77002; 312 Sutter St., San Francisco, CA 94108.

THE MEDIA BUREAU provides funds for presentation of video & audiotapes in NY State, incl. screenings, installations & performances of multi-media works incorporating substantial amounts of video or radio, workshops, short residencies, tech. asst & equip. access relating directly to these projects. Appls reviewed continuously. Contact: Media Bureau, The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St., New York, NY 10011; (212) 255-5793.

THE FILM BUREAU of Film/Video Arts offers grants to NY State exhibition programs sponsored by nonprofit organizations. Matching funds up to $300 avail. for film rentals & up to $200 per speaking engagement for presentations by filmmakers, producers, directors, technicians & scholars. Deadlines: Aug. 15 & Jan. 15. Contact: Charles Vassallo, Film Bureau, F/VA, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003-4797; (212) 673-9361.

NEW YORK COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES: Call for proposals for Cultural Literacy in a Multi-Cultural Society to support projects of free events for general audiences. Deadline: Dec. 15, 1988. Contact NYCH, 198 Broadway, New York, NY 10038; (212) 233-1131.

Trims & Glitches

CONGRATULATIONS to Skip Blumberg, who has been selected for the Canada Council's Visiting Foreign Artist Program.

REYNOLD WEIDENAAR'S *The Thundering Scream of the Seraphim's Delight* was a winner at the 19th Annual Sinking Creek Film Celebration Film/Video Competition, received the Silver Award at the Houston 21st Annual Festival of the Americas, and was awarded the Golden Eagle by the Council on International Nontheatrical Events. Kudos!

MINNESOTA ARTIST Robert Lawrence received a $2,000 award from Intermedia Arts Minnesota with funds from the Jerome Foundation. Congratulations!

CONGRATS to Dennis Darmek of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, winner of a Film in the Cities Regional Film/Video Grant for *The Big Inning*.

KUDOS to Demetria Royals who was selected as an Artist-in-Residence at Harvestworks for audio production on her multi-media project *Inventing Herself: Stories by Black Women*.

CONGRATULATIONS to 1988 New York Foundation for the Arts Fellows in Video: Shu Lea Cheang, Ken Feingold, Paul Garrin, Matthew Geller, Julie Harrison, Daniel Riesenfeld & Megan Roberts.

MORE CONGRATULATIONS to the New York Foundation for the Arts Fellows in Film: Theo Cremona, Joel L. Freedman, Su Friedrich, Jim Hubbard, Roland Legiardi-Laura, Jennie Livingston, Mira Nair, Kevin Rafferty, Leslie Thornton & Jane Weinstock.

KUDOS to AIVF member Charles Butler Nuckolls III, whose video *Shakre Lessons* won a spot in this year's WNET *Independent Focus* line-up and won best long documentary honors at the New York University Video Festival for the 2nd year in a row.

CONGRATS to Liane Brandon, whose documentary *How To Prevent A Nuclear War* won a Blue Ribbon at the 1988 American Film & Video Festival.

CATHLEEN KANE & JOE LEONARDI, both AIVF members and winners of this year's ACE Award in "Program Series—Magazine Show" for *Arts Revue*, produced by Long Beach Museum of Art Video on Simmons Cable TV in Long Beach, CA. Kudos!

KUDOS to AIVF's Open Solicitation Finalists for FY 1988: William Elwood, *The Road to "Brown"*; Robert Richter, *The World Bank and the I.M.F.*; Catherine Tatge, *Book of Days*; Susan Robeson, *The Jazz Master: The Life and Times of Benny Carter*; William Greaves, *Paul Robeson: A Son's Memoirs*; and Ginny Durrin, *Second and D.*

Help Yourself. Join AIVF today!

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MEMORANDA

PUT ON YOUR THINKING CAP

Next spring, *The Independent* will publish a special issue on media education. We are interested in proposals for articles related to that topic, defined in the broadest sense. We especially want to include material that suggests innovative educational methods in relation to film/TV/video studies. Critical and theoretical articles will form the backbone of the issue, but we will include case studies when appropriate.

Our emphasis will be on post-secondary schooling, and we hope to feature writing about alternatives to traditional institutions as well as reviews of curricula at the major film schools and video program. Proposals from students are welcomed.

Send proposals before September 15, 1988, addressed to: Martha Gever, Editor, *The Independent*, AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, N.Y. 10012. also include a sample of published writing. *The Independent* will only return manuscripts that are accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, an information clearinghouse, and a grant making program. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, foundations and organizations: The New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fund, the Beldon Fund, the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, the Consolidated Edison Company of New York, the Benton Foundation, the Funding Exchange, and the dozens of organizations that advertise in *The Independent*.

RATE INCREASE FOR CLASSIFIED ADS

Last chance for old ad rates:

October 8th deadline for the December 1988 issue

Beginning with the January/February 1989 issue of *The Independent* , Classified rates will increase to $20 per ad. Take advantage of the old rates while you can. Renew your ad before October 8th– **and save.**

Send copy– **maximum** 250 characters– and check for $15/issue payable to FIVF to: Classifieds, The Independent, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., New York, NY 10012.

PROGRAM NOTES

Kathryn Bowser

Festival Bureau Director

The long-awaited *AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals* has been completed and is now available. The new *Guide* updates and supplements information in the 1986 edition and features expanded indices that greatly facilitate the location of data on each festival. Domestic and international festivals are indexed by date, deadline, category, state/country, along with a separate listing of easy-access addresses and phone numbers. In addition to entries that appeared in *The Independent* over the past two years, the guide also includes brief descriptions of over 140 additional festivals. The *Guide* can be ordered from AIVF Publications, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012; the price is $19.95, which includes postage and handling.

The *Guide* provides a useful supplement to the information contained in the FIVF Festival Bureau files—press clippings from trade publications, reviews, entry forms and catalogues that are frequently updated—and in a special computer database, which are available to the public for research. For those who cannot visit FIVF's offices in New York City, we answer telephone inquiries. To keep this information current, we continually look for input from film/videomakers about their experiences at festivals. Since FIVF staff members are rarely able to attend festivals and film/videomakers are always interested in inside information on who's where and what's what, any criticism, praise, or general comments are welcomed. Send the Festival Bureau a postcard or letter, or call to discuss your experiences, so that we can keep informed about the practices of the festivals you've dealt with.

Active participation from AIVF members is also needed to expand our festival liaison service. Recently the director of the Locarno International Film Festival in Switzerland visited FIVF's offices to screen and select independent feature films. A call in *The Independent* yielded several entries, but another valuable source proved to be personal recommendations and information on new films sent to us by filmmakers about their recent work. Press releases, notes, postcards, letters are helpful in this regard. Similar formal relationships with foreign festivals (among them Sydney, Creteil, Locarno, Turin, Montreal Women's, Berlin, and Oberhausen) are supplemented by informal relationships with many other festival representatives who frequently call, write, or stop by for news on independent production. This is true also for occasional foreign buyers and distributors. Features, documentaries, shorts, video productions, experimental, and animated films and tapes are all in demand. This service extends to arranging group shipments to some festivals and keeping track of the hundreds of tapes and films submitted to us for preview. We've started to compile a computer database on productions-in-progress as well as recent releases, and our tape library likewise facilitates festival recommendations and referrals.

Our information files track a number of production issues important to independent producers. Over 225 distributors are represented by catalogues and press releases. We maintain a loose-leaf notebook with information on grants, fellowships, awards, and application deadlines from private and government funders throughout the country, in addition to posting information of this kind in our office. The activities of media centers and funding agencies are also documented in separate files. Other files cover a host of topics, including copyright issues (with forms and guidelines), unions, production and budget forms, transfer facilities, sound editing and mixing facilities, screening room locations, film archives, personnel, location scouting, state film commissions, tax questions, contracts and releases, fundraising, marketing and promotion, insurance, etc. Our hope is that the central location for this information will make life easier for our members.

Reader Questionnaire

Since its debut in 1979, *The Independent* has grown from an irregularly published newsletter to a highly respected monthly magazine on independent media. We have expanded in all directions, with increased news coverage, extensive information listings, and feature articles on international topics, as well as profiles of diverse film- and video-making practices in this country. This summer, we have decided to poll our readers to help us chart our future course. Please take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire. Your answers will help us evaluate what we have done and assist us in planning the contents of the magazine. Use the spaces provided to write your comments.

features: Do you regularly read the features in each issue of *The Independent*? yes___ no___

If not, which feature articles have you read in the past year?

What topics—general or specific—would you suggest for feature articles?

news (Media Clips): Which kinds of "Media Clips" do you find informative? (circle)

funding public policy media organzations public TV

cable TV tax laws foreign media markets/festivals

What additional topics would you suggest we cover in the "Media Clips" section?

reports on activities and events (Field Reports): Do you regularly read the "Field Reports" section? yes___ no___

What topics would you suggest we report on in "Field Reports"?

legal (Legal Briefs): Do you regularly read the "Legal Briefs" section of *The Independent* ? yes___ no___

What legal topics do you suggest we cover?

technical (In Focus): Do you regularly read the "In Focus" section of *The Independent* ? yes___ no___

What technical topics do you suggest we cover?

book reviews: Do you regularly read the "Book Reviews" in *The Independent* ? yes___ no___

What kinds of books would you like to see reviewed?

festivals (features and "In Brief"): Do you regularly read the "Festivals" section? yes___ no___

Do you find the features and "In Brief" listings to be a helpful and accurate source of information about festivals? yes___ no___

Have you entered any film or video festivals on the basis on information supplied here? yes___ no___

If so, how many? _____

production news (In and Out of Production): Have you ever sent information about your productions to "In and Out of Production"? yes___ no___

Have you received any inquiries about your work as a result? yes___ no___

notices: Do you regularly read the "Notices"? yes___ no___

Have you used information provided in this section? yes___ no___

Which categories do you find most useful? (circle):

Conferences • Workshops Films • Tapes Wanted

Opportunities • Gigs Publications • Software

Resources • Funds Trims & Glitches

classifieds: Did you ever place an ad? yes___ no___

If so, did you receive any response? yes___ no___

Did you ever respond to an ad? yes___ no___

letters: Have you ever sent a letter to the editor? yes___ no___

Do you have any suggestions concerning the contents of *The Independent* that are not included above?

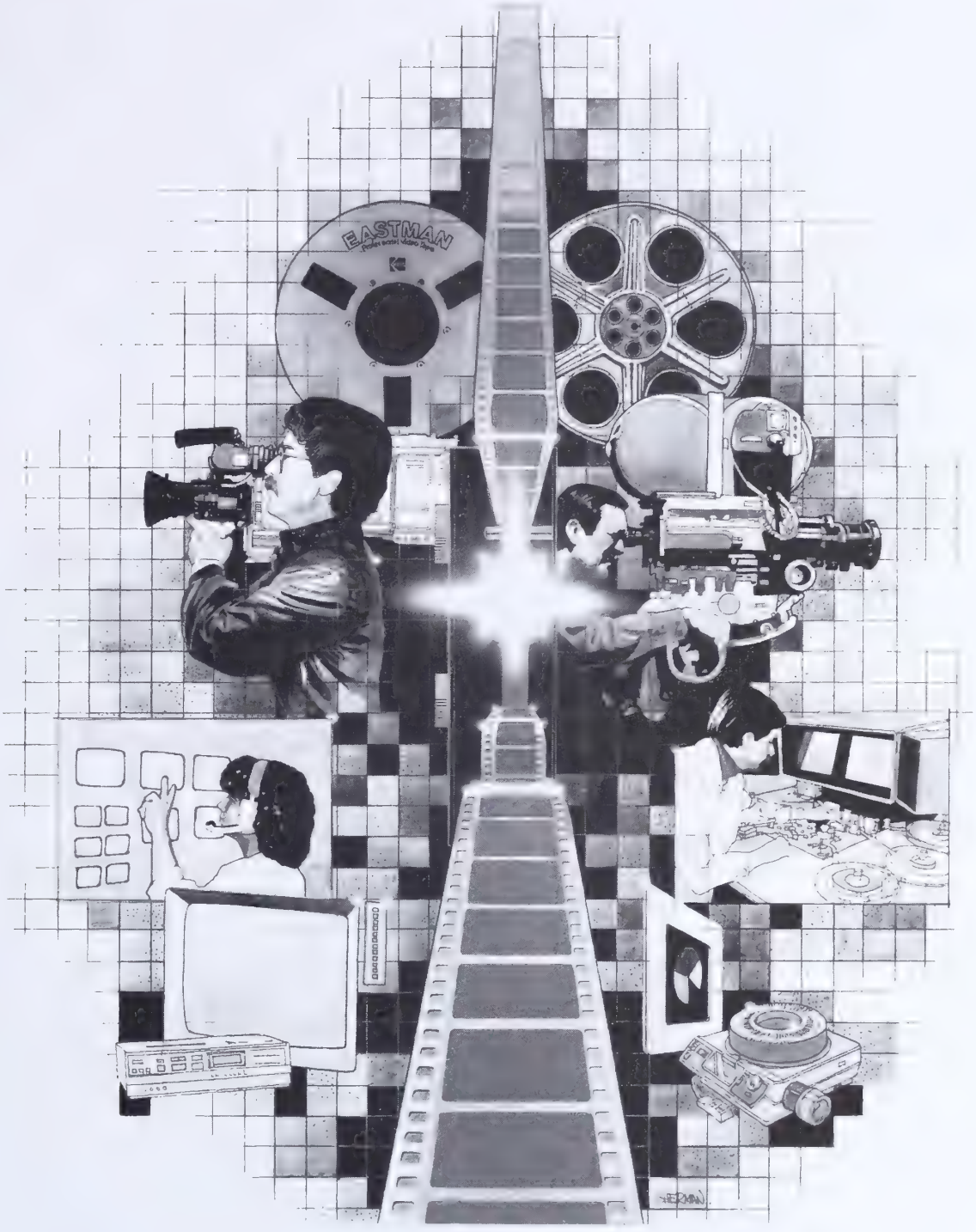
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LETTERS

ACCESS' APPEAL

To the editor:

I enjoyed reading "Corporate Speech, Power Politics and the First Amendment," by Herbert I. Schiller in the July 1988 issue of *The Independent*. The portion on cable TV is as thorough and succinct an explanation as I have seen of the conflict between the cable industry's interest in maintaining absolute and exclusive control over cable television and the public's interest in having some cable channels set aside for public use.

The cable industry has been quite successful in using the labels of "First Amendment," "deregulation," etc., to advance the goal of eliminating public, educational, and government channel set-asides. Schiller's article does an excellent job of revealing and explaining the reality.

I hope to see more on cable television in *The Independent* in the future.

—Robin P. Charleston
Cable Administrator, Chicago, IL

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INDEPENDENT COMPANY TELEVISES THE NEWS FROM SOUTH AFRICA

Just a few years ago the South African policy of apartheid saturated newspapers and news programs with coverage sparked by nationwide protests for divestiture by corporations and universities. In recent years that coverage has noticeably decreased and so, it seems, has the public's concern about apartheid. In an attempt to fill the void created by the mainstream press and reignite public awareness, the television program *South Africa Now* was created. According to Rory O'Connor, president of Globalvision, the independent production company that produces *South Africa Now*, "We were sitting around one day discussing the lack of coverage by the networks and decided to do something about it."

Since its inception last April, *South Africa Now* has been broadcast by the satellite program service ITN (International Television Network), which is picked up by 106 stations. The program is also carried by the Boston Cable System and was recently added to New York City public station WNYC's Wednesday night line-up. New York City's other public television station, WNET, is discussing plans to air the program in its Sunday noon public affairs slot. Material from *South Africa Now* has also been included in the CNN *World Report Show*.

South Africa Now is produced independently on a nonprofit basis in association with the Africa Fund, a nonprofit anti-apartheid organization. Formatted as a half-hour program, which focuses on daily existence under apartheid, the program does much more than show the horrors of the South African system of segregation. It also shows triumphs over it. This is accomplished by dividing the program into three segments: news, background, and culture. One episode, for instance, focused on "Whites against Apartheid," which featured an interview with African National Congress activist Dennis Goldberg, who was imprisoned in South Africa with Nelson Mandela for 22 years. The cultural portion of that particular program featured Johnny Clegg and Savuka, South Africa's best known multi-racial band. Another program focused on Namibia and included an interview with Sam Nujoma, president of the South West Africa People's Organization, better known as SWAPO. In a July 12 article in the *Village Voice*, Daphne Pinkerson, the show's producer, stated, "We do not want to show only the violence. We want to tell the stories behind the images and put the images in context." The program attempts to show, as Pinkerson puts it, "that life goes on behind the images of violence."

Each half-hour show costs about $3,000 per week, and the series' annual budget is in the range of $50,000, approximately the cost of one installment of a network news magazine program like *20/20* or *60 Minutes*. The producers of *South Africa Now* obtain the material used in the program from independent filmmakers, political activists, and amateurs working within South Africa and elsewhere. The program's survival depends on donations of materials and services from individuals and organizations sympathetic to the program's mandate. According to O'Connor, their most pressing needs are "more resources and more money. We currently have a deficit." Says O'Connor, "Our goal is to become a self-sustaining program."

What makes *South Africa Now* unique? In 1985, following the South African government's institution of press censorship, requiring police supervision of journalists and banning picture and sound recordings in areas of unrest, coverage of the region was sharply curtailed. Fearing a shutdown of their news bureaus, many news agencies decided to toe the line and not offend the government censors. Consequently, the problem of apartheid vanished from the headlines, achieving the aims of the South African government. With no bureaus to close down and no identifiable journalists to expel, *South Africa Now* has been unaffected by the press ban. Due to Globalvision's independent initiative, the topic of apartheid has been resurrected for the U.S. public after its burial by the mainstream networks and newspapers.

LORNA JOHNSON

AMERICAN FILM GOES WEST

For several weeks this summer, telephone calls to the office of *American Film* magazine were picked up by an answering machine. This was a small but tell-tale sign of the sweeping changes following the American Film Institute's sale of its 12-year-old magazine. By the end of June *American Film* had a new owner, Billboard Publications, Inc. (BPI), which hired a new publisher, Hershel D. Sinay, the former publisher of *Ranch and Coast*, *East/West Network*, and *California Business* magazines. A search was on for a new editor and editorial staff. And the midtown Manhattan office had been vacated in preparation for a move to Los Angeles by the fall.

When asked why AFI had decided to sell *American Film*, executive director Jean Firstenberg cited two reasons. Referring to AFI's joint publishing venture with the AMS Foundation for the Arts, Sciences and Humanities, initiated in 1986, Firstenberg replied, "Our relationship with the AMS Foundation had changed. When Dr. Arthur M. Sachler died [in May 1987], it was time for us to reconsider." AMS helped underwrite the magazine at an unspecified amount. It subcontracted actual publication to MD Publications, whose New York office *American Film* shared until the buy-out.

Firstenberg also acknowledged that a deficit "had always been the case" at *American Film*, and that this was the other factor contributing to its sale. While some members of AFI's board of trustees thought the magazine could be produced at a break-even point, Firstenberg said that the magazine and executive committees came to the conclusion that this was not possible.

From BPI's point of view, *American Film* was a choice acquisition, deficit or not. As a special interest consumer magazine, it was an ideal complement to *Hollywood Reporter*, a motion picture trade publication which BPI had purchased only months before. This combination paralleled the mix already attained by the company's music publications. As Samuel Holdsworth, executive vice president of BPI, put it, "*American Film* is to *Hollywood Reporter* what *Musician* magazine is to *Billboard*." In addition, *Billboard* magazine and AFI had already established a working relationship through the American Video Conference, devoted to nontheatrical and special interest home videos, which they jointly coordinated for the past two years. "We knew the people at AFI, and we were comfortable there," said Holdsworth.

American Film and *Hollywood Reporter* are not the only magazines BPI has picked up recently. Last year they bought *Photo Design* and *Plants, Sites & Parks*, plus *Back Stage* the preceding year. As of mid-1988 BPI owns 10 magazines, as well as the *Producers' Masterguide*, 15 other directories, and two book clubs. They publish specialty books under four imprints, electronically distribute information, and license material for broadcast and republication. BPI's expansion mode will undoubtedly get further encouragement from its new owner as of last year, Affiliated Publications, a publicly-traded holding company

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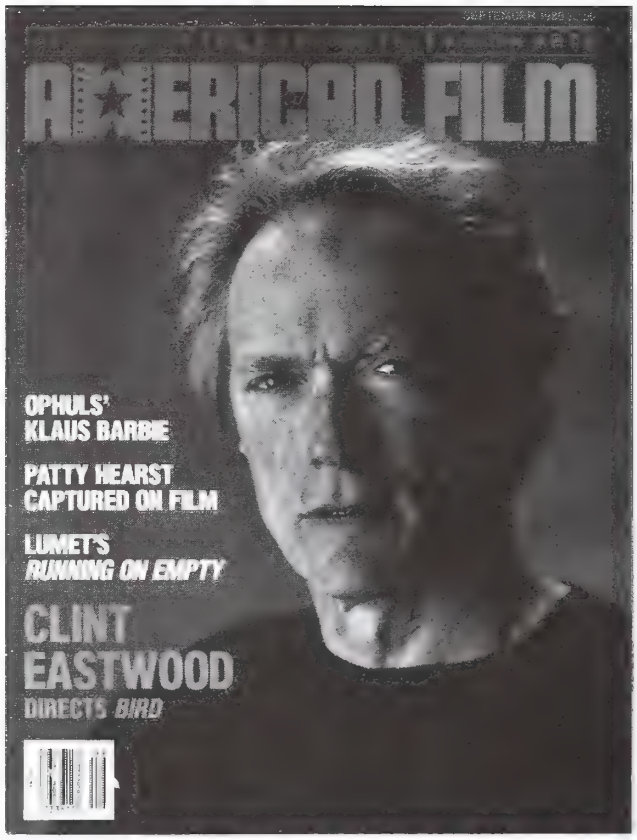
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There are changes afoot at *American Film*. As the September masthead indicates, not only did the magazine get a new publisher and owner this summer, but there's a new editorial staff as well.



which owns the *Boston Globe*, among other communications businesses. In their 1987 annual report, Affiliated stated that they "will continue to seek opportunities for expansion in the field of specialty publishing, supporting BPI's overall goal of becoming the primary information source in the nation for the entertainment, art and design industries."

In the past, BPI's acquisition of a magazine did not automatically lead to editorial or staff changes. *Hollywood Reporter* and *Back Stage*, for instance, were left untouched. Both, however, were financially healthy at the time of their purchase. *American Film*, which was not, will see a boost in the number of advertising sales reps. But the key to remedying *American Film*'s on-going deficit, says Holdsworth without hesitation, is "editorial, because it's a circulation-driven magazine." Not surprisingly, it was in this department that the transition hit some rough spots. According to several sources, when the editorial staff was first told of the impending sale in early May, assurances were given that they would be able to stay on in their present jobs. They were not told about the possibility of the magazine's move to Los Angeles. About 10 days before the close of the sale, however, rumors of the impending move circulated in *American Film*'s editorial office. Shortly after, they were offered temporary positions on a freelance basis—being asked, in effect, to see through several more issues until the magazine and a new staff settled into the California office. None of the New York City staff were asked to relocate to Los Angeles.

On June 14th, the day of the sale's completion, an article appeared in *New York Newsday*, followed by items in the *L.A. Times* and the *Village Voice*, with news of the abrupt resignation of five of *American Film*'s seven editorial staff members, including editor Susan Linfield and senior editors Debra Goldman and Ann Martin. "Billboard didn't seem to understand that this magazine couldn't be put out on a month-to-month basis," explained Linfield. "It's very hard for editors to work without some sense of continuity. You tend to establish long-term relationships and assign articles very far in advance." According to the newspaper reports and additional sources, the former staff was also embittered over their belief that BPI had been disingenuous, misleading them about the future status of their employment. Linfield says their resignations resulted from several factors, including "the general feeling that the move to Los Angeles was announced too late. The staff felt there was a lack of candor on the part of Billboard."

When asked why none of the New York editorial staff were asked to move to Los Angeles, Holdsworth said that BPI did not have the resources to pay for their relocation, then admitted, "We frankly weren't too excited with what we saw in the editorial product. And I don't think anybody else has been," adding, "There's no point in fighting the old regime when you're wanting to make changes." Regarding BPI's failure to inform the staff of the move to California, Holdsworth said, "We never announced it because we didn't own the magazine until the day that we did announce it. When you haven't done a closing on a business deal, you cannot talk about it." As far as the staff cutbacks are concerned, Ann Haire, senior vice president of BPI, anticipates employing an editorial staff of five.

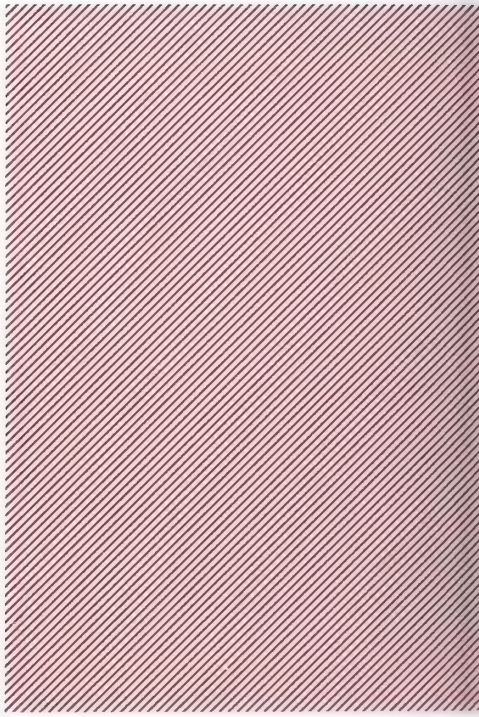
Without citing specifics, Holdsworth indicated that the changes will be more a matter of repackaging than a wholesale overhaul. There will not be any attempt to make the magazine into a trade publication, since *Hollywood Reporter* already fills that bill. Nor will *American Film* make a play for the mass market—the territory targeted by Rupert Murdoch's *Premiere* magazine, which appeared on the scene last year and is frequently compared to *American Film*. (*Premiere*'s executive editor is Peter Biskind, Linfield's predecessor at *American Film*.)

Although ownership is now in BPI's hands, *American Film* will not sever its ties with AFI. A subscription will remain a benefit of AFI membership, and the magazine will devote a couple of pages each month to AFI-related news. However, Firstenberg says that AFI will consider additional ways to communicate to its members, such as through a newsletter. The most significant link with AFI, at least potentially, is an editorial committee composed of people from AFI's board of trustees and from BPI. Holdsworth is enthusiastic about nurturing a relationship with AFI's board, saying, "They're the best resources any editor could hope to have." AFI's board contains a fair share of industry heavies, including such Hollywood luminaries as board president Charlton Heston, Jack Lemmon, Steven Spielberg, Jack Valenti, plus the presidents of Capital Cities/ABC, CBS Broadcast Group, NBC Entertainment and the chairs of a number of powerful companies in the motion picture industry. While the make-up of this committee will not be known for some time—let alone their actual input and influence—it is possible that AFI's trustees will be more involved with BPI's than AFI's *American Film*.

Since the AFI board and potential editorial committee members are representative of major film studios and entertainment conglomerates and given BPI's decision to move *American Film* to Los Angeles because, as Holdsworth said, "the film business is out there," the magazine's coverage of the independent film scene may suffer by the change in ownership. While independents never became a major topic in *American Film*, they did figure into the overall editorial picture, particularly during Biskind's tenure as editor, when a special "Independents" column appeared each month. *American Film* also ran profiles of Spike Lee, Jim Jarmusch, Alex Cox, and other relatively successful independents in its "Close-Up" column, as well as occasional features and cover stories on well-known independents like Oliver Stone, the Coen brothers, and John Sayles. While BPI's Haire says they "hope" to continue covering independents in *American Film*, the upcoming issues will speak for themselves.

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FILM ARTS FOUNDATION SHARES THE WEALTH

Last July 18 Bay Area film- and videomakers won individual grants totaling $40,000 from the Film Arts Foundation Grants Program. Of the 18 $1,000 to $3,000 grants that were handed out, 10 represented full funding for personal shorts, six were development grants, and three were completion/distribution awards. Among artists receiving grants in the personal works category were Lawrence Andrews (*Cultural Diminish*), Craig Baldwin (*UFOs Stage CIA Hoax*), David Baltzer (*The Slipstream*), Tina Bastajian (*Jagadakeer: Destiny, What Is Written on the Forehead*), Brian Burman (*Museum Pieces*), Todd Herman (*Safety Lies...*) Lynn Hershman (*First Person Plural*), Lynn Kirby (*Heatlamp*), Marlon Riggs (*Tongues Untied*), and Jay Rosenblatt (*Vicious Cycle*). Artists who received funding in the development category were Michael Conford (the David Sohappy Documentary Project), George Csicsery (*N Is Number*), Celest Greco (*A Harvest of Hope*), Helen Prince (*Tia*), and Douglas Wiehnacht (*Working Class Writers*). And in the category awarded completion/distribution grants were Su-Chen Hung (*On the Way Home*), Jon Jost (*Liebesfall*), and Hal Rucker (*Manic Denial*).

In its fourth year of grantmaking, the Film Arts Foundation Grants Program is the only California funder other than the California Arts Council that gives grants to individual media artists and the only media service organization in the country with a separate endowment of funds earmarked for individual film and video projects. According to FAF development director Julie Mackaman, the grants program is an extension of FAF's services to Bay Area independents. To supplement media facilities, information services, and advocacy support, the media center's staff, says Mackaman, "has been dreaming about the time when FAF could give direct support to film- and videomakers." Today, the program boasts an endowment of nearly $300,000.

"We are a small grants program that doesn't aim to pay for everything," Mackaman explains. "Our goal is to make a significant impact with a small grant that will help film- and videomakers get to the next step in the direction in which they want to go." Hence, the specific funding categories. For the most part, the personal works grants are given to film- or videomakers whose project budgets do not exceed the $3,000 amount of the grant. The $1,000 project development grants aim at getting mediamakers started on new projects, and the $1,000-$5,000 completion/distribution grants go to those who are at the last hurdle of the production obstacle course. In both development and completion categories, project budgets must be proportional to requests. Only Bay Area artists qualify, and this year 229 applied. All proposals are reviewed by a five-member panel representing diverse genres, styles, and backgrounds. 1988 panelists included filmmakers Sal Giammona, Susana Muñoz, and Trinh T. Minh-ha, artist Sharon Grace, and curator Kathy Geritz.

Although not built overnight, the endowment has proved successful in attracting private foundations' investments in what has long been considered a risky venture—funding individual artists. "We want this program to be a lab that demonstrates to funders the feasibility and creativity that can be involved in funding media," Mackaman says of FAF's approach. And it has achieved that. The program nearly doubled its endowment in less than two years.

The genesis of FAF's program was a $30,000 grant from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation in 1984. Although the program was refunded by Hewlett for a second year, FAF recognized that it was totally dependent on one foundation. Then, with much coaxing by FAF and added confidence in funding media production, in 1987 Hewlett offered FAF a challenge grant of $150,000 that it was required to match in three years to create an endowment. To date, FAF has raised $148,000. Additional monies have come from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Grants for the Arts from the San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund, the LEF Foundation, the California Tamarack Foundation, the Pioneer Fund, and the T.B. Walker Foundation. With the endowment as the core for the FAF Grants Program, FAF continues to seek funding partners for each annual round. And as an established media arts center that acts as a buffer between individual artists and funders, FAF should have little problem winning more funders' trust.

The Film Arts Foundation is located at 346 Ninth St., San Francisco, CA 94103.

QUYNH THAI

...SO DOES THE PAUL ROBESON FUND

The Funding Exchange, a collective of philanthropies committed to grassroots organizing, has been a cradle for progressive causes since its inception in 1979. In 1986, after the demise of the Film Fund—a organization created for the purpose of funding social issue media—the Funding Exchange created the Paul Robeson Fund for Film and Video, named after the famed singer, actor, and political activist. Administered by Lillian Jimenez, the fund's goal is the support of film and video with aims congruent with those of the Funding Exchange's member organizations: that is, to promote social awareness and to activate social change. According to Jimenez, "The Paul Robeson Fund is the legacy of the Film Fund living on."

The Robeson Fund distributes money both from the Funding Exchange's general coffers and from private foundations and individuals, like the Boehm and CarEth Foundations, which earmark set amounts of money for media grants that are then administered by the fund. The Robeson Fund also sponsors the Women's Project, again out of

general funds. In its first year the Robeson Fund disbursed $272,800 in awards ranging from $2,500 to $20,000. A few of the projects funded were Loni Ding's *The Color of Honor*; Kevin White's *Not All Parents Are Straight*; Renee Tajima and Christine Choy's *Who Killed Vincent Chin?*; and Laurie Coyle's *Fenix Rising*. The subject matter of the 40 films and videos which received money in that cycle represents a wide range of contemporary issues that are not adequately dealt with in the mass media—issues like AIDS, gay and lesbian relationships, the environment, and human rights. In its second year the fund hopes to give grants totaling around $300,000.

One of the unique projects administered under the auspices of the Paul Robeson Fund is the Women's Project, which encourages and supports women working in film and video. The Women's Project will only accept applications from women who have editorial control over the project for which they apply. Projects that have women codirecting with men or as producers with a male in the directorial role are not eligible. For the 1988 fiscal year the Women's Project disbursed $86,000 in grants. A sample of the projects funded includes Ellen Bruno's *Return to Cambodia* and Patricia Benoit's *Tombe Leve*, with grants ranging from $1,500 to $10,000. And this year the Women's Project extended its base and sponsored the Script Writing Development Fund. Again, open solely to women, this program is concerned with developing and strengthening women's writing skills for narrative film and is designed to help women make the transition from documentary to narrative modes of storytelling. This particular fund awards four $5,000 grants to women working on original screenplays.

Both the Paul Robeson and the Women's Project support films or tapes at any stage of production. The highest priority, however, is funding projects near completion and according to guidelines "will be in distribution within a year or less." Projects seeking funds for preproduction, on the other hand, assume the lowest funding priority. All applications are first reviewed by the staff. Those that meet the requirements for the award are then forwarded to a review panel composed of individuals in the field of social issue media, which prepares a list of films recommended for funding. It is the actual funders, however, who decide who receives awards. Of the 40 projects recommended for funding in 1987, 35 were given grants.

Against the backdrop of the conservative Republican administration reigning in Washington and the resulting policies of agencies like the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Paul Robeson Fund fulfills a noticeable need. Projects that may appear too political or controversial are precisely the stuff on which the Paul Robeson Fund thrives. In 1987, out of 40 grants awards, 26 went to women, 13 to minorities, two to gays and four to projects dealing with gay issues. The Paul Robeson Fund is paving ground for a new wave of filmmakers by providing access that may be denied



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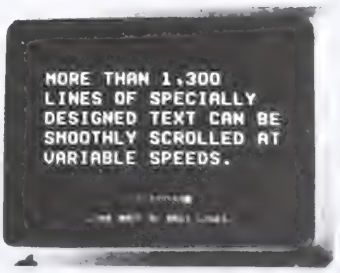
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LJ

LYN BLUMENTHAL: 1948-1988

The *What Does She Want?* project, which Lyn Blumenthal completed a few months before her death on July 21, encompasses many of the concepts she embraced in all her work in video: feminism, a private versus public persona, the meaning of personal identity and expression in a 'media packaged' world, the construction of 'self' in relation to sexuality, the fragmentation and reconstruction of visual images, and the power of media in defining reality and culture. This project, which entailed the compilation of six 80- to 90-minute programs from myriad experimental films and tapes by women, represented a pioneering home video distribution concept that attempted to forge a path beyond the predictable boundaries of 'art video' venues of educational, alternative space, and museum audiences into the untried realm of home-market viewers.

Throughout her life Lyn was concerned with and worked simultaneously on many ideas centering on the need to develop a meaningful personal expression as a working artist and contribute to an understanding and analysis of cultural, media, and art issues. Sometimes these two forms of working remained separate, but often they overlapped. One led to directing and developing the Video Data Bank—an involvement of 12 years that we shared—as well as participating on grant panels, writing articles, and lecturing. The other led to her personal creative output—sculpture, drawings, video installations, and single-channel tapes.

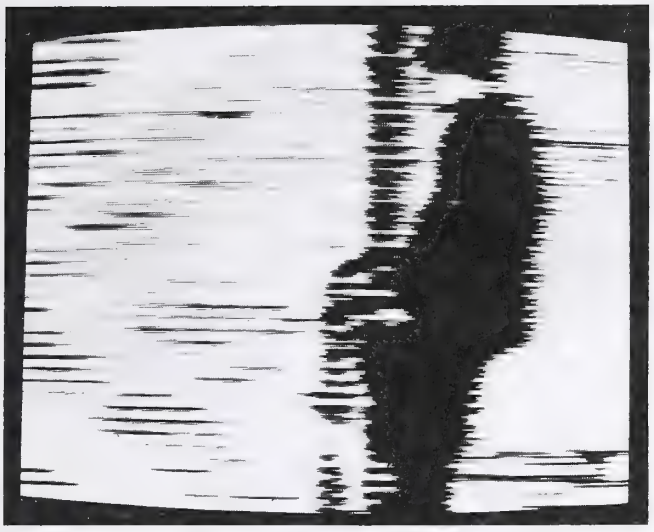
Lyn became interested in video in the winter of 1973, when she bought a Panasonic half-inch open-reel portapak. In March 1974, when Artemisia Gallery, the first women's co-op gallery in Chicago, invited Whitney Museum curator Marcia Tucker to give a lecture about the work of contemporary women artists, Lyn and I decided to tape a short interview with her after the lecture. A few weeks later, we showed Tucker the tape, and she suggested we interview the painter Joan Mitchell. We did, and after that we interviewed the environmental sculptor Ree Morton. Then, having made these three tapes, we had the first glimmer of an idea that eventually became the Video Data Bank.

Lyn and I made six tapes on women artists between 1974 and 1975—all of them unedited. The format that we used for all of our subsequent interview tapes was established in the Mitchell interview: single, fixed camera; tight focus on subject; off-camera interviewer. Each tape's content followed a linear development of the artist's ideas. Lyn shot the tapes; I conducted the interviews. In 1974, Lyn and I both enrolled as a graduate students in the Video Area at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. We continued to make our interview tapes, although the talking head format and the feminist content made these tapes unpopular within the Video Area, which was dominated by faculty and students involved in image-processing. However, they were very popular in the art history and painting departments. In 1972 the school began to collect videotapes made by students and recordings of visiting intellectuals/artists who came to the school to lecture. This collection of about 70 tapes had been named the Video Data Bank, and after Lyn and I graduated in June 1976, we gave the dean of the school a proposal to 'recatalogue' the Video Data Bank. Fourteen years later, the Video Data Bank is the largest collection of videotapes on and by contemporary art and artists in the world.

In the fall of 1977 we decided to commute between New York City and Chicago, since many artists lived and worked there and we intended to produce 18 interview tapes per year to build up the Video Data Bank. We expanded the scope of our interview tapes to include the work of male artists. We started to plan a collection that would be a kind of public record of art and artists' issues of contemporary times, and New York City offered many screenings and collections of video art not available in Chicago at the time. From 1977 to 1983 Lyn also worked on oil paintings, drawings, and cast sculpture pieces and continued to work with video installations, having shows at the Krannert Museum in Champaign, Illinois, (1977) and the Detroit Institute of Art (1978).

In January 1980 Lyn took a trip to Cuba with a group of artists and critics, organized by artist Ana Mendieta. She brought along a 3/4-inch deck and video camera, and the footage shot there became the raw material for her first non-interview tape, *Social Studies I: Horizontes*, which incorporates material from a popular Cuban soap opera. Structurally and temperamentally, shooting and editing video seemed to suit Lyn better than purely private aesthetic pursuits and working in the solitude of an art studio, and she continued to produce video work. In 1984 she made her next tape, *Social Studies II: The Academy*, which again reworks broadcast material, this time the Academy Awards ceremony.

In 1984 the Video Data Bank sponsored a public event, the Video Drive-In, that created an innovative venue for presenting independent video to a non-art audience in Chicago. Independent videotapes were displayed on a giant outdoor screen in the Grant Park Band Shell for two nights. The project was a huge success, with over 10,000 people attending. The Video Data Bank produced two 90-minute tapes for the Video Drive-In—compilations of experimental videotapes from different genres, music videos, and 1950s commercials from television archives. These tapes, called *The Science of Fiction/The Fiction of Science*, were the first lengthy compilation pieces Lyn had assembled, and she meticulously curated



Frame from *Doublecross* (1985), by Lyn Blumenthal
Courtesy Video Data Bank

and structured the tapes according to content, length, gender of maker, and style. This project led her to think about extending video art distribution into the home market. And—important for her own working process—she saw this method as a way to weave multiple ideas into a major, complex, philosophical theme.

Also in 1984 Lyn and Carole Ann Klonarides collaborated on the tape *Arcade*, which is loosely based on the work of painter Ed Paschke and debuted at the *Video Drive-In*. This was followed by *Doublecross*, which Lyn described as "a tape developed from the pretrial testimony and memories of a young girl trapped within an indeterminate sexual identity."

The last tape that Lyn made was titled *Women with a Past*, produced for the *What Does She Want?* series. Constructed from four taped interviews—with Martha Rosler, Yvonne Rainer, Christine Choy, and Nancy Spero—the tape describes the development of each of the artist's ideas and how that relates to personal history and family life. *Women with a Past* clearly pays tribute to the original project on which we embarked in 1974.

Lyn was always a very active spokesperson for the video field. She wrote a number of articles and gave many lectures that defined and analyzed issues relating to video collections, distribution, and preservation. Her major study, "Re-Guarding Video Preservation" (*Afterimage*, Vol. 13, No. 7), outlines in detail the policies, practices, and collections of various video archives and distribution systems. She was frequently a panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York Foundation for the Arts, the Illinois Arts Council, and other funding agencies. Lyn moved forward in high spirits and with great force. She took big risks and was unafraid of supporting unpopular points of view. She recognized important new voices and original video work. She created controversy and dialogue wherever she went. She made an immense contribution to video art and its distribution. She gave a lot of her creative energy for the benefit of others. Her loss is a great and deeply felt one for all of us who work in video and those of us who loved her. Through all who felt her inspiration, Lyn's work continues.

KATE HORSFIELD

Kate Horsfield is an artist, teacher, and director of the Video Data Bank.

SEQUELS

In the wake of House and Senate reauthorization hearings on public broadcasting last March, representatives of the **National Coalition of Independent Broadcasting Producers** [see our June 1988 special issue devoted to the Coalition and public television] and the major public television institutions—PBS, CPB, and NAPTS—spent a number of weeks negotiating a solution to the problem of inadequate funding and broadcast of independently produced films and tapes.

Persuaded by the Coalition and prompted by CPB's intransigence, the House Subcommittee on Telecommunications and Finance, chaired by Ed Markey (D-Massachusetts), drafted an amendment to its 1988 public TV bill that provides for the creation and funding of an "independent production service" in 1990, as well as an advisory board that would evaluate public TV's minority programming. In other respects, Markey's reauthorization bill, H.R. 4118, leaves the structure of CPB intact. The bill was then forwarded to the House Energy and Commerce Committee, headed by Rep. John Dingell (D-Michigan), where it was approved.

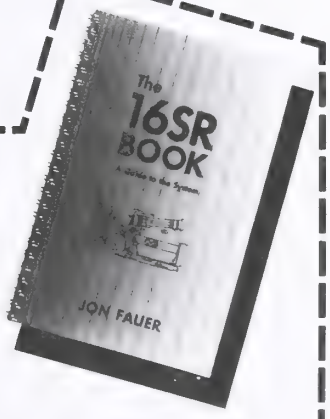
Meanwhile, the Senate Communications Subcommittee, chaired by Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii), announced its reauthorization bill, S. 2114. That piece of proposed legislation would reroute 80 percent of national program dollars—i.e., the budget of the Program Fund—to local public TV stations, beginning in FY 1990. The Senate Commerce Committee passed this bill, which the full Senate will debate and vote on this fall. Predictably, CPB execs have vociferously protested the plan, while the PBS, the National Asso-

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ciation of Public Television Stations, and heads of the larger stations have expressed their pleasure with the Senate bill. The Coalition responded by pointing out the past failure of local stations in supporting independent work and have continued to lobby for a separate, federally funded National Independent Program Service within CPB. Both House and Senate bills include funding authorization of $304-million in 1991, $354-million in 1992, and $404-million in 1992.

A conference committee comprised of members of both House and Senate Committees are scheduled to meet this fall to reconcile these drastically different bills.

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Elsewhere in Congress, other interests of independent mediamakers are on the line, but in this case it's the bottom line that's at stake. On July 28 Senators Daniel Moynihan (D—New York) and Bill Bradley (D—New Jersey) introduced a bill—S. 2664—exempting artists from the IRS' **Uniform Capitalization Rules** ["Media Clips," July 1988]. The bill clarifies that the exemption will apply to film- and videomakers whose indirect expenses in a given year do not exceed $50,000. In the House, however, a similar bill exempting artists from the capitalization rules was included in an omnibus Technical Corrections Bill, passed by the Ways and Means Committee, but film- and videomakers—protected in an earlier House bill—were omitted. AIVF, which represents independent film- and videomakers as part of the lobbying organization Artists for Tax Equity, has urged its members to help find cosponsors for S. 2664 in the Senate so that the bill has a chance of superceding the House version when reconciliation meetings take place.

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The July 25 issue of *Multichannel News* reports that the controversy over **public access and the Ku Klux Klan** continues across the country ["Media Clips," July 1988]. In Kansas City local access producers are already feeling the fallout from the city council's decision to alter its franchise agreement with American Cablevision, changing the public access channel into a local origination channel. The measure was ostensibly a means for blocking the Klan's access to Cablevision's studios and program schedule. The rules governing local origination give the cable company editorial control over shows that run on the channel. KC public access producers claim that Cablevision is using the new status to restrict access and exercise control over their programs.

Now the Spokane, Washington, city council is considering a similar amendment for Cox Cable's Spokane franchise, currently up for renewal. Cox wants similar editorial control over the public access channel, although general manager Alan Collins has stated the proposal is not a direct response to the Klan's efforts to gain access to Spokane's cablecasts.

And in Reading, Pennsylvania, KKK leader Roy Frankhouser announced that he will continue to press for program time on Berks Community Television's public access Channel 41, which is a local origination channel. BerksCable has so far rejected the Klan's requests.

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After a federal court upheld the decision in favor of the documentary filmmakers who challenged the **United States Information Agency's** denial of educational certification—required for exemption from customs duties—for films deemed at odds with government policies ["Sequels," July 1988], the agency reacted by suspending all certification. The USIA has also appealed the ruling, announced last May, which confirmed a 1986 decision by federal Judge A. Wallace Tashima, who ruled that the regulations for certification used by the agency were unconstitutional.

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The cable industry has long argued that, under the First Amendment, cable operators should not have to abide access requirements, nor, under the Fourteenth Amendment, franchise fees ["Sequels," November 1987]. Among all the cable cases now in the courts, **Erie Telecommunications, Inc. vs. the City of Erie, Pennsylvania** has taken this constitutional challenge furthest through the court system. But it has finally reached a roadblock. A U.S. appellate court settled the case without resolving the constitutional question. In the case, a three-judge panel decided in favor of the city, upholding the cable company's obligation to honor the franchise agreement. The basis of this decision was a release, signed by the parties involved. ETI "knowingly, voluntarily and intelligently relinquished any constitutional courses of action which it must have known could be asserted against the city," wrote the judges. If this case goes on to the Supreme Court, the question will be whether ETI waived its constitutional rights, not whether it has such rights—a shift in emphasis that sets the cable industry's First Amendment offensive back several steps.

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While a high percentage of public television stations carried this summer's new independent documentary series **P.O.V.** ["Media Clips," April 1988], there were many cases of cold feet when it came to airing an edited version of *Rate It X*. About a dozen, mainly rural licensees (some with multiple stations) refused to show the one-hour program by Lucy Winer and Paula de Koenigsberg, which includes nudity and explicit language in its wry look at sexism and pornography in the country today. Some stations cited the conservative tastes of local audiences. But at least one station—Cincinnati's WCET—plans to ask the FCC if the program is indecent before deciding whether to air it. The FCC, however, says they will probably not rule on *Rate It X* until a complaint is received.

MIX AND MATCH: RECENT DANCE/VIDEO COLLABORATIONS



Filmmaker Bernar Hebert and choreographer Edouard Lock collaborated on the dance/video *Human Sex Duo No. 1*, performed by LaLaLa Human Steps for *Alive from Off Center*.

Photo: Edouard Lock

Deirdre Towers

Anthony Burgess, the British writer and musician, was in New York City last spring to give a lecture at the 92nd Street YMCA. Thinking she would score a point by expressing her admiration for the filming of his novel *Clockwork Orange*, a woman in the audience received only a grunt and a growl from the author. "Of course I know how successful this film was," said Burgess, "but the director, Stanley Kubrick, made *explicit* what I had made *implicit*." He went on to grumble about his distaste for the translation of his story.

Clockwork Orange was named the best film of the year in 1971 by the New York Film Critics, but Kubrick was the standout, not Burgess. "Despite thematic flaws and narrative gaps, it is a striking, visually brilliant film that provides a chilling, near nihilistic vision of a world dominated by anarchic, vicious violence and engulfed by utter cynicism—a perverse world of tomorrow which some way mirrors Kubrick's view of the world today," observed the writer of the film's entry in Ephraim Katz' *Film Encyclopedia*. Not even a bow to Burgess, who must have winced at the criticism of thematic flaws.

Film adaptations, whether of a novel, play, dance or opera, are bound to be problematic for the fans of the original and terrifying for the originator. Many writers, dancers, composers work in seclusion, rely on their own instincts and argue only with themselves. The prospect of cooperating with a producer, let alone subjecting themselves to the egocentric drives of a director, can set them on guard, or worse, freeze their imagination. But the equivalent of a screenwriter for the dancer or performance artist has yet been born. The filming of a dance or the idealized creation of a dance that could only exist on the screen depends on the meeting of minds between dancer and filmmaker. The process of collaboration is as complicated and unpredictable as any marriage. Looking at some couples, the chemistry seems wonderful, but the children are monsters. Or we find the opposite: no one can see how it could possibly work, but the children are marvels.

John Schott, the producer of the public television performance series *Alive from Off Center*, still believes that commissioned collaborations will in time set the hybrid form of dance video on its true course. "I feel that it is an art form with enormous potential that is largely unexplored. Partly, this is because too many dancers arrive in the studio with their dance bag over their shoulder and say, 'Do me.' It's usually the filmmakers who come to me with solid proposals and clear ideas. Dancers need to take a more active, dominant position, and take advantage of being in a gravity-free, totally controllable environment," says Schott.

As a matchmaker, *Alive from Off Center* has produced a few miscalculations but enough successes to steadily gain more broadcast and funding outlets. The John Sanborn/Mary Perillo collaboration with Lee Breuer on *Sister Suzie Cinema* was a wonderful cross pollination of three strong personalities, for example, whereas the Bill Irwin and Charles Atlas project last year, *As Seen on TV*, which many viewers enjoyed, left both artists feeling estranged. Both Irwin and Atlas voiced their appreciation for the other's work but thought that the result of their joint efforts was consistent with neither of their styles.

As John O'Connor wrote in the *New York Times* this summer, "Alive from Off Center has the unenviable task of trying to look avant-garde, at a time when this week's experimental boldness becomes next week's pay cable comedy special." For Schott, the push has therefore been simplified. Rather than worrying about being avant-garde, he can concentrate on commissioning collaborations that promise to produce something other than what one normally sees—something different. He tries to pair artists that he thinks will complement one another, such as Blondell Cummings, whom he sees as an organic, emotional performer, and Canadian Bernar Hebert, whose elegant filmmaking he admires. He hopes that the artists will discover something they couldn't have alone. The results of the Cummings/Hebert project, *Commitment: Two Portraits*, measured up to Schott's expectations. The media's compulsive consumption of new tricks and ideas only clarifies his position as producer: to find talent that seems willing to explore the unexplored, to provoke the collaborators into an honest, focused communication and then step back and let the process run its course.

Modern dancer Cummings who's been working with video since the early seventies says, "When a choreographer chooses a collaborating filmmaker, what is important is not that the other artist makes the same choices you do, but that he or she enhance it in a direction you can possibly see it going. I was willing to abandon certain things in my two pieces because Bernar has a theater background. He understands the television and theater logic and appreciates the development of a character. I knew we shared certain concerns. So when it involved shedding the ABA form that I originally used for the concert version

of *Chicken Soup*, in favor of a more linear, progressive structure, I didn't resist. The main thing was that Bernar was willing and open to what my intent was. I was also curious as to how the piece could be transmitted through his imagination."

Hebert, whose work was also represented on this season's *Alive* with LaLaLa Human Steps' *Human Sex Duo No. 1*, is interested in working with pieces that have a narrative thread. He looks forward to filming dances that offer clues about how he can contribute. For *Chicken Soup*, now retitled *Commitments: Two Portraits*, he tried to mirror the introspective tone of Cummings' dance by building a set that would move outward as the movements gradually commanded more space. As Cummings suggests a woman chatting with old friends, cleaning, thinking to herself, breaking her stride with a spasm of emotional pain, Hebert unobtrusively frames this small black woman, dressed in her flowered house dress, alone in her kitchen, in such a way that her story is heard loud and clear. The light coming through the curtained windows adds a beautiful freshness. Amplifying the sound of her scrubbing the floor, adding a moment of slow-motion, and playing with close-ups—for example, of just a finger following the path of an invisible cockroach—all contribute to the feeling of intimacy.

Hebert and Cummings spent a considerable amount of time finding a common sympathy, defining their purpose and understanding what



Choreographer and dancer Blondell Cummings paired up with Canadian filmmaker Bernar Hebert to create *Commitment: Two Portraits* for *Alive from Off Center*. Here Cummings performs her introspective *Chicken Soup*.

Photo: Louise Oligny

kind of effect each passage should have on the audience. The second portrait is set in a Rousseau-like, lunar landscape with murky, oppressive light. Dressed in a black nun's habit, Cummings is the only responsive being in this peculiar environment. She does share it, however, with two women in white habits who recline stiffly until they rise to blankly exit. Hebert shot this with the cold objectivity of an inspector who pulls up for a bird's eye view and then swoops in to examine Cummings' contorted expressions and emotionally packed gestures. Both portraits are equally arresting, but the second is as strange as the first is familiar.

This year, *Alive* was also involved with the partial funding and subsequent airing of collaborations arranged through a cross-cultural project initiated by the Kitchen in New York City, the French Ministry of Culture, and Ex Nihilo, a French production company. "The productions were done on kind of a dare," said Kitchen producer Robin O'Hara, referring to the risk of finding projects that would be appealing to both U.S. and French audiences, "yet we all recognize it's out of financial necessity that we develop additional resources."

As a result of this joint venture, modern dancer/choreographer Stephen Petronio, who toured for a long period with Trisha Brown, chose to work with French filmmaker Jean Louis Le Tacon after watching several of his fashion and music videos. The two decided to film a relatively stationary dance entitled *Sotto Voce* with the accompani-

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ment of Lenny Pickett. At the outset, Petronio said, "I would flinch at the literal translation of my idea, but then I got excited by the things Jean Louis came up with that I would never have done." In this case, the conception and the energy between the artists seemed very exciting, while the results were pale by comparision. Petronio said he had designed a system of letting characters pass through his body by choreographing with the thought of 20 different photographs of singers, politicians, musicians attached to different parts of his body. "It's a vocal performance with no sound. The solo is rooted to one spot, and I'm playing with the feeling of being trapped." Le Tacon became fascinated with the idea of the photographs and began to collect images with which he could enclose Petronio. The broadcast version seems a fourth generation removed from the initial concept. Opening with three naked men on a bench, descending down a tongue, the video cuts to Petronio alone in a spotlight. The pedestal on which the dancer stands revolves, and thereafter the frame largely catches only his torso, shown from the side and overhead. A bare-shouldered Petronio in black and white pulls out from the main figure in color. The marbled background swirls throughout, seeming to compete with Petronio for our attention.

Also part of the French/American project was *The Fourth Dimension*, created and conceived by Zbigniew Rybczynski. Ever since his award-winning *Tango*, Rybczynski has consistently provided polished demonstrations of choreography based on the manipulation of raw footage. *The Fourth Dimension* would be a brilliant electronic pas de deux if Rybczynski combined his editorial pyrotechnics with a sense of dynamics. The tape relies on the repetition of a basic movement, a slow spiraling. First the inanimate spirals around animate—the tree around the naked woman—and then vice versa; then the man and woman spiral around each other in a double helix sculpture. The effect is monotone, inhuman, but also sensual. Rybczynski has not ventured a collaboration with a choreographer to date. Perhaps he doesn't thinks he needs one.

So far, no one with an ability to realize dance on the small screen equivalent to Rybczynski has appeared in the dance world, no choreographer of major talent who also has a solid grasp of the technical possibilities of video. Meredith Monk, whose *Ellis Island* remains one of the most stunning dance videotapes to date, perhaps comes the closest to understanding both mediums. Her million-dollar production, to which *Alive* contributed and which will air in next year's season, should be telling. Until such a mastermind comes along, the complicated, unpredictable process of collaboration between dancer and videomaker has to provide the solution. Slowly the craft of dance video will emerge, and the magical chemistry needed for success will be become less mysterious.

Deirdre Towers is a staff writer for Dance Magazine

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CHARLES BURNETT'S REALISM



Film still from *Killer of Sheep* (1978), by Charles Burnett

Monona Wali

Charles Burnett, 44 years old, is a fiercely independent Black filmmaker living in Los Angeles. His first feature film, *Killer of Sheep*, made while he was a student at UCLA in 1978 for $10,000, is a masterpiece of American neo-realism, a painfully humorous and tragic account of the daily life of a slaughterhouse worker in South Central L.A. *Killer of Sheep* won the Critics Prize at the Berlin Film Festival and received other awards in the U.S. and abroad. *My Brother's Wedding*, his second feature, made for $80,000 in 1983 and financed by the West German public television channel ZDF, tells the story of a young man caught in a morality play that opposes his loyalties to his family to those to his best friend. It is ironic that Burnett's films employing subtle realism are better known in Europe than in the United States. Since the completion of *My Brother's Wedding*, Burnett has been developing new projects and struggling to find financing for his next film. This July, he was awarded a prestigious John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellowship, popularly know as the "Genius Grant," which will pay him an annual stipend for five years. The following interview took place in the fall of 1987. Burnett and I discussed his background, his experiences in South Central L.A., and how this influenced his work and his career, as well as some themes and directions in his filmmaking.

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Monona Wali: When you were growing up, what did you think you were going to do?

Charles Burnett: I didn't know really. I thought I'd join the service, because my friend Bobby and other guys were going into the service.

MW: Why didn't you?

CB: We were forced to take a position against the war. Before I got out of high school, a recruiting officer came around. When I turned 18, I didn't go down and register immediately, even though they stress how if you don't do that you can get arrested. I didn't take it seriously. When I did go down to register, they gave me the third degree, and I was really angry. A lot of things began to gel. I was aware of institutionalized racism, because in school I became very aware of it—the way they wanted to shove us into shop class—the whole attitude of "well, you're not going to do anything anyway...."

When I did go to register at the draft board, there was this lady who noted every mark, like scars, for identification purposes. She was very rude, and I'm thinking I'm doing them a favor, right? She acted like they owned me. I was in school at the time they wanted to draft me, so I got a school deferment, but I had to go down to the draft board anyway. There were long lines—zigzagging up the stairs and in twos and fours. It was like a dream. And there were these guys hollering at you like you're already in the service. There was this blonde kid, typically collegiate American guy, walking up and down and cheering us on: "We've got to go fight for this country." And we were looking at him, thinking, "What is the matter with this guy?" It was one of the first times that someone pointed and said, "You're an American, and you have obligations." He was saying that you were supposed to support his way of life—freedom. I'm saying, "*What?* Freedom? At the same time the police would call you "nigger" in a minute. You would walk down the street, and they would pull you over. It was rumored that the L.A. police recruited southern whites to dominate the Black community.

MW: Did you get your deferment?

CB: I got a deferment. But the whole Army business was a joke, because

they would only take kids who didn't have any prison record or police record. They took the core—the potential—of the Black community. All these guys who were fighting each other and wanted to prove themselves physically went to jail. It was a double whammy.

I was in line at the store not too long ago behind this huge guy. I recognized some of his features. Then he turned around and said, "I know you." I said, "Yeah, you look familiar. Where do I know you from?" He said, "You don't recognize me. We went to school together, but I was really thin at the time. During the time I was drafted, I gained weight by eating a lot. I drank a lot of salt water to get high blood pressure, and then when I got huge I couldn't get my weight down." He was big as a door. And when I was at the Toronto Film Festival I ran into a guy I hadn't seen in a long time, and I said, "What in the hell are you doing way up here in Toronto?" And he said, "I came up here to dodge the draft and made a living and stayed."

MW: Was this during the sixties?

CB: Yes. I had just finished high school. I was a product of that pre-Civil Rights Movement. You really felt your limitations. Your reality was a few square blocks. You felt this was your only world, and the only way to get out of it was to join the service. But that was when the war in Asia started to blossom, and the draft wiped out my whole neighborhood.

MW: Kids you grew up with?

CB: Kids who were friends died in the service, and I remember one particular case—actually two cases. One guy was killed and he had a twin brother. The troubling thing was I didn't know which twin was killed. And there was another kid who was one of these guys that detonated mines. One of the mines went off and blew him to nothing. When they brought his remains home, they didn't open the casket. That left an impression. That was after the Watts riot, and people had had enough police harassment.

MW: Was that 1964 or '65?

CB: The summer of '65. At the time of the riots I was at Los Angeles City College. I would catch the bus—looking for summer jobs—and come back towards South Central and see smoke columns—back to reality, right? It was very strange because the first night of the riot I didn't know what was going on. The riot started after the attempted arrest of Marquette Frye—we went to junior high school together.

MW: Where were you living during that time?

CB: In South Central—99th and Towne, off Avalon and Century. During the last stages of the riot I could see the National Guard stationed at the corner from my window. During the day I would observe the results of frustrated people, and at night I would go out in the street and witness the destruction.

MW: Did you participate?

CB: No. Actually, it was just a few people. There were more people standing around. It only takes a few people to do damage. It relieved a lot of pressure. It also hurt the community. It dispersed the community because before that there was a center. When those areas were destroyed all the stores were closed, and it took a long time for the businesses to move back in. But there was a migration of the middle class just before the Civil Rights Movement. The Watts riots really speeded up the process, leaving a vacuum—moral, economic, political. Watts lost its center.

MW: You were going to college at the time? What were you studying?

CB: Electronics. I don't know why, but I became disenchanted with it. I was lucky though, because I had a writing class at LACC with Isabelle Ziegler—a really great person—and I became interested in storytelling. I also had a feeling of wanting to find out what went wrong when I was growing up. Some of the kids I grew up with disappeared—violently—or went to jail. It was a tightly knit community. When I went to college, I began to see another world—that there's something more to life than thinking that by the time you're 20 you're going to be dead. In the community, the only world is a few square miles. And then I saw all these other people who seemed healthier—enjoying life—particularly when I went to UCLA. Still, South Central was an interesting area. Most of the people were from the South—Texas, Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama—mostly Mississippi and Arkansas.

MW: What about your family?

CB: They're from Mississippi. I was born there but my family moved to L.A. when I was just a child during the migration of people moving north and west because of the war. At the time, L.A. was very racist and segregated. It was like South Africa and still is in many ways. In the forties, you had to live east of Central Avenue. I was told there were areas you couldn't go.

The thing that influenced me when I was a kid was that everyone was working all the time—strenuous work—and there was a healthy attitude about it. My family and neighbors used to raise chickens and grow food. But one of the things that began to happen with my generation and continued to grow was a rejection of the kind of work the parents did, particularly domestic work. There was a stigma attached to what they did. Your parents worked hard and always said, "I don't want my kids to work hard like I do. I want something better." As a consequence, they sort of sheltered their kids. There was also a negative attitude about the past.

When I was growing up I used to work during the summer for a friend's father who was a carpenter. Everyone was a plasterer or carpenter, or something like that. I used to admire those guys in many ways. There was a man named Bland who had big arms with veins like ropes—I always wanted big veins—and big hands. I remember Bland keeping the cement mixer going, and I'd try to mix...forget it. That kind of work is bad on the heart. These guys were young and strong at one time, but later on they just crumbled from the strain. Bland died early. The drug scene wasn't as bad as it is today, and people had a sense of coming to terms with their lives much better than they do now. There wasn't anything like the random violence today. People would fight, but only on an extreme occasion were people killed. There was some sense of limitation.

MW: Did you get into a lot of fights?

CB: Everybody had to know how to box. You had to know how to protect yourself. You couldn't go around whining. It's how you carried yourself that got you through the day. And then, in the area I grew up, there were a lot of gangs. I lived right in the center of it, so I couldn't avoid taking sides. You had to identify with one group or another, even if you weren't part of it. The gangs weren't connected to drug trafficking, like they are today. It seemed then that the law was very hard on pushers. Alcohol was the thing.

MW: The worst?

CB: No. There were some pills like reds, fender benders, uppers and downers—I never took any of the junk. The reason they called it fender bender was because they would get in the car and bang into something.

A lot of the guys were sent to juvenile camp and got physically big, really muscular and exaggerated their physical strength. There was an emphasis on physique and physical prowess—being able to knock somebody out with one punch.

MW: Did this affect the way boys and girls got along—or didn't it?

CB: Relationships with women were strange then, very strange—a lot of myths, false notions. There was really a dichotomy of sexes. When we were young, groups of boys would do things like going to the swamp—Devil's Dip.



Film still from *Killer of Sheep* (1978), by Charles Burnett

MW: Where was that?

CB: L.A. had a lot of undeveloped areas that you could walk or ride a bicycle to. Devil's Dip was where Southwest College is now, which used to be an oil field. There were steep hills, and we'd to take our bikes and fly down the hills. There were metal shops in junior high school where you could make metal bows. So we'd go out with beebee guns and bows into these swamps for the sheer adventure of it. Girls couldn't come along. We couldn't participate in their world and vice versa.

When we got older there was this notion of a rap—a way of talking to a girl. You talk her into dating, you talk her into going out with you—talking nonsense: "Oh baby, I love you" and this and that. The younger guys didn't know what was going on and would ask, "How'd you get that girl?" "Well man, you have to have a rap." "What do you mean, a rap?" "I can't tell because, hey, you might steal my woman." Then the older guys would say, "Your rap's not better than mine. I'll take your woman anytime." So there was a mystery. It was a difficult period for a lot of guys because, in a sense, nothing was real. All these obstacles were generated by myths, cultural myths that no one really stopped to analyze. You just had to live through it.

MW: What kind of family did you have?

CB: My mother worked all the time. She had a job at Good Samaritan Hospital as a nurse's aide. She left the house at four in the morning and sometimes didn't get back until the evening. So we grew up on our own somewhat, with the help of my grandmother. She had to quit work to help out.

MW: What about your father?

CB: He was in the service, so it was a one-parent family.

MW: He never came home?

CB: Except one or two occasions. That was it. He didn't have any impact at all.

MW: Did you go to church when you were a kid.

CB: Yeah.

MW: Was your mother religious?

CB: My grandmother was. If you can go to the movies you can go to church—that's how she thought. There was a strong moral sense of good and bad still in the air. My grandmother had a great influence.

MW: When did you start going to the movies?

CB: At an early age. They had these 10 cent shows during the summer where they showed old time black and white serials. It was a social thing. Invariably there would be a fight. First you'd see the movie. Then between that and the second show, you'd gather in the lobby or the bathroom with your friends. So would the guys from the other side. Then all hell would break loose. You'd go there to pose and posture.

MW: Was there any types of movies you preferred?

CB: I liked a lot of old Hollywood films. Most of the kids in the neighborhood were overwhelmed by scary movies like the original *Frankenstein* and *Werewolf*. Every time they screened everyone would go to the theater. I missed what they called "race movies"—by Oscar Micheaux, Spencer Williams—films made by Blacks about Blacks. That was missing from my experience until later on.

MW: Did you think about the kinds of roles Blacks played in the movies you saw?

CB: They used to show Tarzan movies. And there was Tarzan who would pick up these Black guys, throw them across the river, and out-run them. He'd wipe out a whole village of Black warriors, and we'd cheer, "Yeah! Yeah!" We used to yell, "Get him, Tarzan! Yeah, get him, Tarzan!" Identity crisis, right?

You know what that reminds me of? *Hearts and Minds*. There is a Black guy in *Hearts and Minds* who's shot as a talking head—from the top up. He talks about a battle he was in against the North Vietnamese when they asked for air support. When the jets came, they hollered, "Yeah, jets! Yeah, jets!" But the jet dropped the cannister with napalm on them instead of the Viet Cong. Then the camera reveals that he was burned and maimed by the napalm.

MW: How did you decide you wanted to make films?

CB: I always wanted to get involved in photography when I was in high school. I didn't have a camera, but this guy I knew had one—a regular 8 home movie camera—and his was the first camera I ever looked through. Somehow it was there, in the back of my mind—something that wasn't really formed yet. And when I went to City College I worked in the main branch of the L.A. public library downtown. I worked in the evenings and usually had a couple of hours to kill, so I'd go to a movie. So it was that, combined with studying writing. At the time, the arts became very fashionable. So it was just a matter of finding the right medium. There a lot of people were involved in plays, and lots of people were writing poetry.

MW: Were your friends doing that, or was it mostly your friends in college?

CB: Mostly the friends in college. The Watts Writers Workshop was blooming. Until—it was rumored—an FBI informant burnt it down.



Film still from *Killer of Sheep* (1978), by Charles Burnett

MW: Were you part of the Workshop?

CB: No, but people I knew were. It's hard to explain how things like Malcolm X had an influence on taking me in a certain direction or toward a form of expression, but somehow it did.

MW: Was he a hero for you?

CB: He made a strong impression. The mosque that the police attacked wasn't too far from where I lived. Across the street was the famous night club called the Five-Four Ballroom. The police and the media saw the Muslims' political positions as a threat. There was a shootout at the mosque. We used to go by and look at the bullet holes in the building. Years later, when I was in East Berlin, walking down the streets where you can still see bullet holes in the walls, the mosque in L.A. came to mind.

It was a time of choosing. Some people supported, some denounced Malcolm X. He was building self-confidence, because he'd demystify whiteness. I never start disliking people just because of race, so I never took on the hate aspect of the philosophy. But Malcolm X had a lot of presence, and there was an element in his character that you could borrow from. His story was incredible. He went through the same things as the man on the street. His story is a familiar one, like so many people who started the wrong way. However, his story departs from the familiar one because he took a negative experience and changed it into a positive force.

MW: He was one of the only voices speaking loudly and clearly.

CB: I found that people I knew gravitated toward Malcolm X, as opposed to Martin Luther King. I think he spoke about a different need. He said, "If some so and so spits in my face, he's not going to spit in nobody else's face." That's what people wanted to hear. Because you get tired of people kicking you. Particularly when the double standard was so apparent and second class citizenship was such a part of one's life.

MW: But were you ever part of any group?

CB: I've never been part of any group. There were a lot of guys that joined the Panthers because it offered a direction for young people and tried to give them a focus. You were like part of an army. You had a uniform—a black leather coat and tam. I couldn't take a lot of it seriously because I knew some of the guys who joined the Panthers, like this guy Jerry. We were in school together. He was a nice guy, in many ways, but he didn't have any direction. One day I ran into Jerry at Avalon and 97th. He was in his black leather jacket recruiting for the Panthers. I listened to his rhetoric and said to myself, "Here's this brother. You couldn't get him to sit still in class for two seconds." He was carrying Mao's *Little Red Book*. While we were talking the police drove by. The L.A. police were notorious for shooting people at the slightest provocation. They used to look for confrontation. So the police drove by, and Jerry made eye contact. He stopped talking like a pit bull seeing another pit bull, or like Japanese fighting fish in the same fish bowl. I thought, "Let me get away from this fool." I used to run track, and I'd jog to the store to keep in shape. Later on that night I was running down the street, and all of sudden police cars raced out of the alley and surrounded me. The police jumped out of the cars with guns drawn but saw that I wasn't the person they were looking for, jumped back in the car, slammed the door and zoomed off. What happened was that Jerry and another Panther tried to shoot a policeman on Central Avenue. Jerry got killed during the exchange.

MW: When you went to UCLA, you already knew you wanted to make films?

CB: Yeah. But it's sort of strange, because I knew if I told people I wanted to be a filmmaker and make movies, they would think I was nuts. Even years later, whenever I told people what I was doing, I felt a little strange. If you said you wanted to be a lawyer, that's fine, a doctor, that's fine, but a filmmaker—what? That was *not* a Black man's job at that time, even though there were people like Bill Greaves and Carlton Moss, who had been around for a long time.

MW: What year did you go to UCLA?

CB: Around '67.

MW: So was going to UCLA a turning point in your life?

CB: The turning point, I think, was earlier. I used to think that UCLA was like the twilight zone. At LACC there were working class people, really practical people, pragmatists. They went to night class because they were working during the day. And it was cosmopolitan. There were all sorts of ethnic groups. UCLA was mostly white, and I noticed the liberty these people had. When I was in South Central, if the police drove down the street and smelled dope—marijuana, anything—he went through your pockets and dusted your pockets looking for evidence. If there were any seeds or any residue of any marijuana, you'd be picked up and taken away. When I went to UCLA, some students were doing it in the open and were not paranoid. I was paranoid. I said, "What are these guys doing? They must be crazy!" The security guard would go through the hallway, ignoring everything. His only interest was seeing if the doors were locked. I said, "Damn!"

MW: Who else was there then?

CB: As for other Blacks in the department—Bob Grant was there, John Henry, Don Blackwell.

MW: *Killer of Sheep* is one of the few realistic films about the Black community. What were you thinking about the films you were seeing at UCLA.



Film still from *My Brother's Wedding* (1983), by Charles Burnett

Courtesy filmmaker

CB: I saw a lot of films concerning the working class. But the issues were idealized, and the conflicts were reduced to problems between management and labor. Management exploits the workers, and the union goes on strike. These films had a built-in resolution. Those weren't the kind of films I was interested in, because they didn't represented the experiences that I had gone through, the things I saw, or how I saw working people in my neighborhood. The issues are completely different. What was essential was finding a job, working, making enough money, and then, at the end of the day, coming home and still trying to show signs of life. How does that affect the family? What are the consequences of not having time to spend with the family?

MW: Isn't that what *Killer of Sheep* is about?

CB: It's about how Stan, the main character, loses his sensitivity and still tries to maintain a certain kind of dignity. You can see at the very beginning that this kid is traumatized by a fact of life. The father tells the little boy, "If you see your brother's in a fight, you help him, whether your brother's right or wrong. You don't stand and watch. You go and help your brother." Which is OK, but you can imagine what effect this has if you have a conscience and are developing a moral concept. It was that kind of conflict that I was interested in trying to portray: How do you work in this environment? How do you maintain a certain amount of dignity? I wanted to show what price it takes to survive. How you survive is a personal choice. I don't think a film should tell you A happens, and then B, and then C will necessarily follow. Life isn't necessarily that simple. Films have a tendency to generalize, to reduce complex issues.

MW: You've mentioned that in your own community people didn't feel that their stories were important.

CB: The perception of what stories are about generally comes from Hollywood or from something commercial. Ordinary things that have meaning are lost. Stories make it possible to reveal that we share a common fate.

MW: Do you perceive a shift between *My Brother's Wedding* and *Killer of Sheep*?

CB: There are obvious stylistic differences, but the concerns are the same. It portrays a different aspect of a problem that I was concerned with, and I think it demanded a certain style.

MW: How would you describe that style?

CB: First of all, it's about values. For example, the main character, Pierce, is not that emotionally mature. Philosophically, he looks at life in terms of the haves and the have nots and gets frustrated with people who don't care about poor people. He romanticizes the poor for the wrong reasons, and he hates the middle class for the wrong reasons. He sees things in black and white. His problem is not being able to formulate a realistic view of life. He vacillates and wavers at the wrong moment.

In *My Brother's Wedding*, three different things are going on at the same time: the wedding, his friend getting killed, and Pierce's promise to his mother. The conflict evolves: Pierce has got to be at his brother's wedding at the same time as his friend's funeral, and he can't decide which is most important. So, he's no help to anybody. It creates a conflict—a crisis—because he's not able to evaluate things. If he had made a decision and not made promises he couldn't keep, he wouldn't have created a sad situation. Whereas *Killer of Sheep* is about a guy who—in order to survive and to keep the family together—has to be focussed. For Stan, every day is a crisis. Pierce is like an accident waiting to happen. That film is more satirical. You see what he's going through and what the problem is. It's plotted to lead to a definitive conclusion. *Killer of Sheep* wasn't, but drifts off into a comment about being born again and sticking to the struggle. *My Brother's Wedding* comes to an end by focusing on the necessity of making a decision.

MW: With that kind of resolution in *My Brother's Wedding*, I missed the open-ended structure of *Killer of Sheep*. I missed that lack of resolution. *My Brother's Wedding* seems to fit into a more standard conception of what a movie is. Was that intentional?

CB: No. It was made in 35, for a larger audience. But that wasn't why the two films end differently. *My Brother's Wedding* could only take that form. The story almost dictates it. *Killer of Sheep* is supposed to look like a documentary. And in *My Brother's Wedding*, my concern was to make it tense and claustrophobic, to make things seem in relief, up close. It's like rushing head on into a wall. The metaphor is running blindly—a man who refuses to take control of his life. These guys are rushing into life with limited knowledge. No, it's not so much knowledge they lack, it's wisdom.

MW: Pierce's brother and the girl he marries don't seem very wise either.

CB: They were the other extreme, with no soul, no morals or wisdom. *My Brother's Wedding*, I think, was more moralistic than *Killer of Sheep*. It is more didactic.

MW: It strikes me that *Killer of Sheep* is really a tragedy. There are some very funny moments, but, ultimately, there is a sense of utter hopelessness. Have you been criticized for that?

CB: It depends on the audience. It's not a film for everybody. It's not a film that entertains. It's more sociological. It's meant to provoke a discussion. There are people who live on the edge. Not only does Stan continue to struggle, but he does so without falling into an abyss or becoming a criminal or doing other anti-social things. When I was invited to talk at Harvard, some of the Black students were very concerned about getting good jobs and



Film still from *Killer of Sheep* (1978), by Charles Burnett

being productive citizens. For them, what's substantive is the illusion of progress. They are interested in how to arrive, and they thought images of struggle should be about that.

MW: That reminds me of Greek tragedy and how a community does not like to see their own circumstances as tragedy.

CB: But classical Greek tragedy is about conflict involving kings, not the common people, which limits how tragedy is considered.

Also, some Black people don't like to deal with the past. Slavery, for instance, is a sort of stigma. I wanted to do a story about slaves. I have a book of slave narratives. I happened to mention to some people that I was interested in that period, and the first thing they came out with was, "Why that? Forget about the past. Everyone knows about it." That's one of the fallacies—that people assume that everyone knows about history. But if you ask some people who Martin Luther King was, who Malcolm X was—it's recent history—they don't even know.

MW: Has there been any place that you thought you could live—other than L.A.? It seems to me that you have a lot of attachments here.

CB: True. If you live in a place where all your formative years take place, you sort of draw from that. But, I would like to live in a safer place. I don't think at this point my living in another place would be a problem. It could be a positive thing. For example, there were some Russian writers who wrote most of their good work in exile.

MW: What about living in Africa?

CB: Actually, I was talking to Haile [Gerima] about that. I haven't visited Africa, and I have a strange feeling about it.

MW: A lot of people draw their identity out of Africa and try to go there to find something unique .

CB: It's a very scary idea for me. I don't know how to describe it—like visiting a sacred ground. You want to go back, because those are your origins—but there's an eerie feeling of touching the soil.

MW: How do you support yourself?

CB: Until recently I had a nine-to-five job working at a talent agency. But I was doing a film at the same time, and it was very difficult.

MW: Tell me about the projects you've worked on since *My Brother's Wedding*.

CB: At one point CPB [the Corporation for Public Broadcasting] gave me $11,000 for script development for a film I wanted to do about the death of a girl, a true story.

MW: What was it called?

CB: It didn't have a title as such. It was based on a murder that happened here, and I wanted to make the girl a hero, because she stood up and did everything right and still got killed.

MW: Who killed her?

CB: Gang members. She saw the murder of a cab driver. The police came to her to testify, and she agreed. When the defense attorney learned of her existence as an eyewitness, he told his client, who was in jail. He called her from the jail and harassed her. But when the girl's family complained about the harassment the police said their hands were tied: "We can't do anything until something physical happens." Finally, the guy in jail had his brother kill her.

I presented this story to CPB, and they accepted it. But when I started corresponding with them about it and got their comments, I saw they wanted to take it in another direction. I thought, "What the hell is this? All the guts are taken out. This wasn't the story we agreed on. Let's do another one." And I started writing another story. In the end, the same thing happened.

MW: Does the second project have a title?

CB: *To Sleep with Anger*.

MW: What is it about?

CB: It has to do with Black folklore being superimposed on a situation today. It's about a family. There's Gideon and his wife—about 70 years old—their kids and grandkids. He's retired, and his wife's a midwife. He worked at different jobs, laid track and things like that. They're from the South, they grow food, and they're a little old-fashioned, very moralistic. The sons went different roads. One son is a lot like the father. The other one is more materialistic or buppie kind of a guy. And there is some sibling rivalry between them. And then there is a grandkid who listens to his father tell animal stories.

There is a Georgia folk character named Hairy Man. An old friend Harry comes to visit. He's an evil spirit embodied in a human being. Gideon and he knew each other years back, but Harry admits that he's a stranger now. Still, Gideon invites him in. So Harry stays, and the family is continually disrupted. Gideon gets ill after a party, and Harry emerges as the center of the family. And while Gideon is still alive, Harry has a friend of his propose to Gideon's wife. Harry is also dominating Gideon's younger son—Babe Brother—the materialistic one, who adopts him as his spiritual father because he couldn't identify with his own father. Harry is everything: a



Film still from *Killer of Sheep* (1978), by Charles Burnett

gambler and maybe a murderer—he may have killed somebody in the past. Gideon's wife worries that maybe Harry is really bad, and she confronts him after this other guy proposes to her—it's like a satire—and he's very honest about the whole matter. He tells them, "I told you, I am not the person you knew. I intend to leave." But he wants to take Babe Brother. The two brothers fight about it, and the mother is injured, and they take her to the hospital. Gideon isn't part of this because he has become unconscious from his illness; he's gotten worse and worse since the party. When they come back from the hospital, Harry is waiting to get the son but ends up dying on the kitchen floor. And they can't get rid of him *then*. So it's a continual battle to get rid of Harry.

MW: Is this a real character in Black folklore?

CB: Yes, it's a mythical character. What happens is that, in order to escape him, you have to out-trick him. I was trying to establish some sort of continuity between the present and the past by using contemporary situations, combined with this folklore character. I started doing that, but CPB didn't like the idea that I was combining fantasy and reality after seeing the first draft. Now I'm working with Cotty Chubb, who will produce the film.

MW: In this film, will you deal with conflicting philosophies like those in *My Brother's Wedding*?

CB: Yes and no. The characters are different, and it hints at what's taking place: the supernatural elements and the cultural elements. These characters have all these conflicts from the past that are also part of their lives today. It's also about racism.

MW: One thing that strikes me is that you're just as much a part of a community as you are a filmmaker. Many filmmakers that I know make films filled with references to film. Your references are to life.

CB: Earlier I explain some of the problems when I was growing up. I identified with lots of kids that didn't make it. Life cheated them. It was a waste of people, and it continues—even more so now. I arrived at the notion that you owe it to somebody to do something. I also think that's entertaining, because what's entertaining is not car chases and stuff like that, but the subtle things that happen between people.

MW: That's why you're an independent.

CB: There are a lot of independents who have a unique point of view—like Haile Gerima, Victor Nuñez, Julie Dash—who find the fact of being independent allows them to choose their subject matter regardless of the commercial success. For example, Victor Nuñez, who lives in Florida, makes films about Florida. One of the bad things about Hollywood is that you lose your perception of what a story is—whatever that means—and the implications of what a story does and what it's for. There is a notion that the sillier the story is—they don't put it in those terms, they say "entertaining"—the more people will go to see it. They don't have any obligation to the public. I feel that I have one.

MW: What has that cost you, in terms of your own ability to make films?

CB: It hasn't cost me too much. Life is a struggle, and I'm engaged and trying to do something that's very difficult—make sense out of life, explore things, grope about and dig out meaning in these events.

MW: Do you think you're an optimist?

CB: It depends.

MW: A pessimist? Are you a cynic?

CB: I think I'm very pragmatic. I'm a cynic on one hand, because I know that the only way way I can make films is to do it myself—cynical in that sense. But I'm optimistic about my own ability. I know the world's a struggle—like the guy in *Killer of Sheep*, the only thing he can do is try and continue to try. That's that metaphor of Sisyphus, pushing his rock up the hill. You can't turn round and swim back now. You're too far gone....

Monona Wali is a writer and filmmaker who lives in Los Angeles.

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From Boston to Honolulu

ORGANIZING FOR THE NATIONAL INDEPENDENT PROGRAM SERVICE

Editor's note: In the June issue of *The Independent*, devoted to the subject of independent film/videomakers and public television, we published a series of documents detailing the activities of the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers and the campaign to establish a National Independent Program Service (N.I.P.S.) within public television in this country.

Much of that material assumed a national perspective, concluding with the transcripts of testimony before Congress given by various independent producers and representatives of the National Coalition. At the same time, we acknowledged the essential role of local and regional organizing efforts in the campaign to gain reforms in public television. This fall, we hoped to publish a collections of reports from around the country in conjunction with a detailed analysis of the new reathorization legislation—or, at least, an analysis of the bill that emerged from a House and Senate conference committee.

As we go to press, however, House and Senate Committees have produced radically dissimilar bills (see the "Sequels" section of "Media Clips" on p. 11 of this issue), and the legislation that will result from the conference committee is difficult to anticipate. Nevertheless, we decided to publish the reports that were prepared by producers who have been active in the National Coalition, without a final evaluation of the entire campaign. What follows, then, is a survey of some—not all—of the local and regional organizing strategies that took shape in various cities and areas of the country. As a mosaic, these stories form an exciting picture of the ingenuity and perserverance of U.S. independent producers and their willingness to work cooperatively to diversify public television.

DEBORAH LEFKOWITZ

BOSTON

On a day-to-day basis, organizing for the National Independent Program Service meant simply lots and lots of phone calls. But if I look back to where we started, all those phone calls add up to some significant accomplishments. We made progress in terms of educating and involving our legislators about the concerns of our local media community. And, in the process, we generated strong local support for N.I.P.S.

We began as an ad hoc Public TV Advocacy Committee, composed of individuals from various parts of the Boston media community. Many of us were independent filmmakers who had had difficult dealings with public TV over the years. Others were video programmers, writers, or community cable producers. This committee, which I co-chair with Nick Kaufman, had been meeting for several years to discuss issues having to do with CPB. Each time we scheduled a meeting, we notified all those who had indicated interest using a phone chain. We called many more people than ever came to our meetings. Although time-consuming, making these calls was an effective means of updating a network of people about the issues and gathering feedback from them.

Since two of our Massachusetts legislators—Congressman Edward Markey, who chairs the House Subcommittee, and Senator John Kerry—served on the Congressional subcommittees that oversee public broadcasting, it was especially important to demonstrate the relevance of N.I.P.S. to the local independent community. When we began organizing, it was clear that neither Kerry nor Markey was well-acquainted with Boston independents.

One strategy we devised to make them familiar with our work was inviting their aides to attend selected screenings by local filmmakers. For example, an aide from Kerry's Boston office attended the standing-room-only premiere of Liane Brandon's film *How to Prevent a Nuclear War*. The next day, the aide told me enthusiastically on the phone, "The film was very strong. It's just a crime that work like this doesn't get broadcast on public television."

Even when the aides couldn't come to screenings, sending them film schedules was a good way of indicating where and to what extent independent work can be seen in Boston. I tried to stay in touch every several weeks by sending issues of the Boston Film/Video Foundation's newsletter with articles about the National Coalition or calling to point out a particularly good review of an independent film in the *Boston Globe*.

At our Advocacy Committee meetings, there was considerable discussion about how best to document the number and diversity of locally produced films and videos which have never been broadcast on public television. One suggestion was to put together a demo tape of shows rejected for broadcast. Another suggestion was to obtain statistics, for example, the number of American Film Festival Blue Ribbon winners never broadcast. In the end, neither could be done with our available resources. Using the resourses we did have, I got on the phone and interviewed several dozen Boston filmmakers about their experiences with public television.

The resulting report profiled a representative selection of award-winning Boston independent work that has not been broadcast and identified Boston producers who have been funded by CPB through the Open Solicitations category. Since 1984, CPB has funded only five Boston projects. Of those five, two were affiliated with public television stations and the remaining three were series rather than individual programs. This report was submitted to Markey's Subcommittee Office in Washington with the request that it become part of the independent record for the Reauthorization Hearings

held in March.

Generating support and endorsements for N.I.P.S., especially from outside the media community, proved to be much more laborious and time-consuming than we had anticipated. Although we listed lots of likely prospects during our brainstorming sessions, each contact required a somewhat lengthy explanation and follow-up with written materials. Even those who agreed immediately to write a letter of support had to be called, called again, and yet again. Inevitably, our letters became stalled on someone's desk waiting for approval and often took months before they were mailed. But each new supporter of N.I.P.S. added a link to our phone chain, and each time we needed to make calls to Markey's office we had more people to help make those calls.

In late April Larry Hall, one of the Coalition's legislative strategists, met with several of us in Boston and stressed the importance of reaching other members of Markey's subcommittee. Someone suggested making a videotape of Boston independents speaking from their own experience about the need for N.I.P.S. A few nights later five of us gathered to shoot and edit the tape. By working in shifts around the clock we able to complete a seven-minute version by the next afternoon. We sent copies to an independent filmmaker we knew in Washington, and she took the tapes to various offices on Capitol Hill.

One of the most frustrating aspects of organizing is the lack of immediate and tangible results. But, looking back over the past year, our organizing efforts raised awareness—inside and outside the media community—of the need for structural change in federal funding of public television. And even without knowing how it will end, all those phone calls have made a difference.

Deborah Lefkowitz is an independent filmmaker. She writes a regular column on advocacy issues for Boston Film/Video Foundation's Visions, *and has been an active member of the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers since 1984.*

ROBERT SPENCER

NEW YORK

The first chapter in recent efforts by independent producers to create a National Independent Program Service began in April 1983, at a conference on the status of the independent documentary cosponsored by CPB and the American Film Institute. In response to CPB's new plan to funnel large grants for program production through several consortia of public television stations, the phasing out of the Independent Documentary Fund, and the cancellation of the independent PBS series *Crisis to Crisis* and *Matters of Life and Death*, AIVF circulated an "option paper" at the conference that outlined six proposals for improving independent access to public television. The last proposal revived and expanded upon the 1978 Carnegie Commission's concept of an autonomous Center for Independent Television within public broadcasting.

Soon thereafter, AIVF's New York-based Advocacy Committee, long active in the promotion of a larger role for independents in public television, began planning for the 1984 Congressional hearings on public television reauthorization. In October 1983, AIVF held a public hearing in New York and AIVF's executive director Lawrence Sapadin addressed independents at a meeting in San Francisco. These gatherings generated a legislative platform, drafted by the Advocacy Committee and approved by the AIVF board of directors. That document contained a number of demands, including a substantial increase in the level of federal funding to CPB, an acceptable definition of independent producer, a clear set-aside of 50 percent of CPB program production funds for independents, and the creation of a center for independent television production to oversee the distribution of independent production funds and to serve as an advocate for independent producers within the public television system. The San Francisco meeting also prompted West Coast independent producers to create the Association of California Independent Public Television Producers, which has gone on to play a key role in recent legislative efforts.

Late in 1983, with Congressional hearings fast approaching, AIVF's Sapadin persuaded CPB, NAPTS, and PBS to sit down with independent producer representatives in order to avert a public conflict between independents and public broadcasters on Capitol Hill. One lasting result of those discussions was the formation of the National Coalition. Another was CPB's agreement to meet three times a year with the Coalition to discuss funding policies and practices. From 1984 to 1986, AIVF's Advocacy Committee reviewed the progress of negotiations between the National Coalition and CPB and provided guidance for AIVF's participation in these efforts.

Then in 1986 and early 1987, the Advocacy Committee took on the task of coordinating the response from independent producers to an alarming proposal by CPB board member Richard Brookhiser. Brookhiser first recommended and then took steps to implement a review of ideological bias in the content of CPB-funded programs. The Advocacy Committee organized a grassroots campaign to halt the proposed study.

By March 1987 the CPB board had rejected the content analysis proposal, and the Advocacy Committee turned its attention to the 1988 public broadcasting reauthorization bill. At the time, ACIPTP was circulating a position paper calling for an autonomous entity within public broadcasting to fund, promote, and distribute independent works. This position paper served as a catalyst for the Advocacy Committee, which met almost weekly to analyze and revise the discussion paper and transform it into a legislative proposal. A core group—including independent producers Ralph Arlyck, Robert Richter, David Schulman, Sam Sills, Pam Yates, and me; *Independent* editor Martha Gever; media activist Andrew Blau; Media Alliance executive director Robin White; and Sapadin—met regularly throughout the spring and summer. Before finalizing a proposal for N.I.P.S., we debated a series of questions, among them: What will be the service's definition of independent producer and production? Who will be eligible to apply for funds? What will be the grant-making process? How will programs funded by the new service be promoted and distributed? How will the board for the service be selected? Which audiences will programming created by the service address? Over several months, the committee prepared drafts of a proposal, sharing these with ACIPTP and other regional independent producer groups and incorporating their feedback. The committee also researched and printed a detailed chronology of independent producers' relationship to public broadcasting over the past decade, as well as an analysis of the law and policy issues addressed in our proposal.

By mid-June, in time for the annual conference of the National Alliance of Media Arts Centers, our proposal for a new independent service was completed. The announcement of the National Coalition's plan at the NAMAC conference produced several pledges of financial support for lobbying and outreach from several NAMAC member organizations, and NAMAC was enlisted as the first group to endorse the service.

Immediately after that meeting, the Advocacy Committee prepared a fundraising appeal to NAMAC members on behalf of the National Coalition, which secured over $1,000 in contributions. A simultaneous fundraising letter to AIVF members garnered another $7,000 and permitted us to hire a coordinator for national organizing. At the same time, FIVF, the nonprofit affiliate of AIVF, submitted a proposal to the Benton Foundation in Washington, D.C., which resulted in a $7,500 grant for policy research and educational outreach on independents and public TV.

In June 1987, both houses of Congress announced that they would hold oversight hearings on public broadcasting in the fall. With those hearings in mind, the Advocacy Committee began obtaining support for our proposals from media, labor, religious, and academic groups that shared our concerns about public broadcasting and assembled an information package that was widely distributed to the press, Congress, and the media arts community.

In late summer, AIVF hired Janet Cole, a San Francisco-based independent producer and former distributor, to work as the national coordinator of the organizing initiative. Cole spent several weeks in New York City preparing for the House and Senate oversight hearings in November. Afterward, Cole returned to the Bay Area, where she coordinated the national effort to obtain endorsements for the N.I.P.S. proposal. The Advocacy Committee continued to meet periodically in New York City to build further support among AIVF members and public interest groups.

Robert Spencer's documentary Six O'Clock and All's Well *won a Dupont-Columbia University Award in Broadcast Journalism. He currently works as associate producer for Made in USA Productions.*

MARK MORI

ATLANTA

In the South, the campaign for N.I.P.S. started practically from zero. There are only three media arts centers in the region and no on-going advocacy groups such as that in Boston. Regional participation in the NCIPBP previously consisted of intermittently sending a representative from Atlanta to the Coalition's meetings with the Program Fund. But, when it came to lobbying for the N.I.P.S. proposals, there were members of the House and Senate subcommittees from South Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, and Mississippi.

Organizing for N.I.P.S. began in earnest here after the meeting between the Coalition and the Program Fund in San Francisco in September 1987. Upon my return to Atlanta, I called Steve Humphreys, a speech writer for Senator Wyche Fowler from Georgia. I knew Humphreys because he had written about a film I made when he was working as a journalist before going to work for Fowler. It turned out that he was also the staff person in Fowler's office responsible for dealing with public broadcasting issues. He was very sympathetic to the plight of independent producers and willing to entertain the N.I.P.S. proposals. Since Fowler is on the Senate Budget Committee, we tried to get the issue of independent funding within CPB raised during the budget process, but it was too small an item to consider during the haggling that took place over the Gramm-Rudman bill. However, Humphreys did talk to one of the subcommittee aides about the issue and this contributed to raising the level of awareness of the N.I.P.S. proposals.

Also following the San Francisco meeting, I wrote an article about N.I.P.S. for the IMAGE newsletter urging IMAGE members and supporters to send letters supporting N.I.P.S. to the subcommittees' chairs, Senator Inouye and Representative Markey. Later I sent requests for letters to 15 key local and regional activists and independent producers. Inclusion of a sample letter and other National Coalition material was important in generating letters to congressional representatives.

Joe Wider, a filmmaker friend in Columbia, South Carolina, read my name in *The Independent* as one of the representatives at the San Francisco meeting, which led to an inquiry about the Coalition and N.I.P.S. His contact with me then led to an energetic organizing effort spearheaded by Wider in South Carolina.

Last winter, when we went to Washington to lobby, we met with Senator Al Gore's aide, Roy Neel, who reacted with interest to what we had to say. We found him to be extremely knowledgeable, and he offered some creative suggestions about how we might advance the idea of a N.I.P.S. But when we asked him if Senator Gore would sponsor our legislation, he said that it wouldn't be taken seriously, since Gore was not in Washington at the time, but campaigning for President.

As our work progressed, it became clear that we needed to concentrate our efforts on Congressman Jim Cooper from Tennessee. Markey's staff told us that he was a former Rhodes scholar and well-regarded by the subcommittee. Again, Cooper's aide Dirk Forrister was receptive to N.I.P.S., but said he needed letters to sell the plan to Cooper. This was a problem because, of all the Southern states, we had the least number of contacts and lowest level of organization in Tennessee. This turn of events meant that we had to generate some letters from Tennessee. As it turned out, the most successful method was contacting AIVF members who lived in the state. Even though there were only 10 Tennesseans on the AIVF membership list—and only one in Cooper's rural district—we were able to encourage a series of letters, phone calls, and endorsements from a number of these people. They, in turn, got other key people to do the same. Some examples of those who stepped forward as a result of this process to actively support N.I.P.S. are Bennett Tarlton, who is the executive director of the Tennessee Arts Commission; the Center for Southern Folklore; and Mary Jane Cullman from the Sinking Creek Film Festival.

Mark Mori is an independent producer and was president of the IMAGE Film/Video Center in Atlanta in 1987. He is currently completing work on a film about nuclear weapons production, titled Building Bombs.

MARK NIELSEN

CHICAGO

Prior to the movement constituted to push the N.I.P.S. proposal forward, the independent film community in Chicago was a sleeping giant waiting to explode the insiders' tight-fisted grip on public television. In the past months, however, producers in the City of Broad Shoulders flexed their muscles, showing signs of waking.

Beginning in the fall of 1986, more and more producers in Chicago stopped complaining about the unresponsiveness of public television and started to do something about it. Most started out modestly by writing (or reading) critical and historical analyses of public television in newsletters like that put out by the Chicago Area Film and Video Network (CAFVN). Some were in contact by letter or phone with producers in other cities, with other local producers, even with WTTW, Chicago's major public television station (boasting one of the highest viewerships of any public station in the country). Gordon Quinn of Kartemquin Films, a longtime Chicago independent documentarian and committee member of NCIPBP, attended meetings in San Francisco and Washington and acted as the resource person in Chicago as part of the growing national movement. Through local media groups, he stoked the fire and gathered input from local producers throughout 1986 and '87.

In November 1987, Quinn and others at Kartemquin, along with Howard Gladstone and Mariann Kwiat of CAFVN, organized a meeting of independents interested in these issues. Planned around a presentation by Larry Daressa and Loni Ding—two visiting West Coast producers active in the NCIPBP lobbying effort—the meeting was held at the offices of Kartemquin Films, and was attended by about 25 media professionals.

This group represented an interesting cross-section of Chicago: producers whose work varies in style and perspective; leaders of local media advocacy groups like CAFVN, the Center for New Television, and Chicago Filmmakers; directors of youth and/or minority oriented media programs like the Community Television Network and the Community Film Workshop; exhibitors and representatives from Facets Multimedia and the Film Center of the Art Institute; professors from local colleges; a representative from the Illinois Labor Historical Society; and various postproduction professionals. It was not just a collection of friends, either, as many of the people met each other for the first time that afternoon. The atmosphere at Kartemquin was one of anticipation.

After the obligatory wine, cheese, and shmooze, Larry Daressa spoke to the group about the evolution of the N.I.P.S. proposal and the current status of the lobbying effort. Loni Ding added background gleaned from a wealth of research which has been done on CPB and PBS poor performance vis-à-vis independents in light of the mandates in the 1978 public broadcasting act. Daressa argued that the key to making the desired changes in this legislation was increased lobbying of congressional representatives across the country. He reminded the group that Congresswoman Cardiss Collins of Chicago's Ninth District was an important person to win over, a strong supporter of the 1978 legislation, and a legislator concerned with minority issues as well as a member of the House Telecommunications Subcommittee.

Following these presentations and a few questions, the group discussed organizing tactics. We agreed that it was important not to try to go it alone but to rally any individuals or groups we had worked with and made films for in the past. These people would come from a variety of fields and backgrounds and, by expressing their support of N.I.P.S. to Collins, would show the strength and diversity of public interst in these issues. Several people were appointed to draft a sample letter that could subsequently be passed on to the various "constituents" whom the Coalition members would contact. Kartemquin was chosen as a sort of information collection center, gathering and monitoring the response of the producers and constituents to the call for letters.

In addition to letter-writing, plans were made for a delegation of three or four local Coalition members to arrange a meeting with Collins or her staff, once the constituents had written in support of N.I.P.S. In mid-January, Quinn, along with Kwiat, Margaret Caples of the Community Film Workshop, and Milos Stehlik of Facets Multimedia, met with a member of Collins' Chicago staff. The response was very positive, laying the groundwork for an equally positive meeting with Collins' primary Washington staffperson, Bud Meyers, later in February. Finally, Quinn met with Collins in Washington, accompanied by Frank Blythe and James Yee, both directors of Minority Consortia and members of the Coalition.

Although Collins was the main focus of the Illinois lobbying effort, the N.I.P.S. Chicago Coalition also contacted other legislators in Illinois, including Senators Paul Simon and Dixon, Chicago area representative Sidney Yates, and several downstate House Telecommunications Subcommittee members. The letter-writing slowed somewhat last spring, as the action moved to Capitol Hill, but the support in Chicago is on-going.

Producers are also beginning to communicate directly with CPB, further evidence of the effectiveness of our efforts. On September 15-17, representatives of the Program Fund visited Chicago, meeting with independents in workshops and private appointments. The struggle is far from over, but, whatever the outcome, the Windy City hasn't run out of breath just yet.

Mark Nielsen has been the general manager of Kartemquin films in Chicago since January 1987 and is a freelance writer.

ROGER SNODGRASS

SANTE FE

One day last winter I got a call-to-arms from John Adair, the visual anthropologist in San Francisco. As I looked through the packet of materials from the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers that he sent, I realized that the campaign for a National Independent Program-

ming Service was my own cause. Certainly, the paltry fare of public television is everybody's problem. As I began talking to other people during the course of the day, not one person defended the public television system. Even people outside the profession complained about programming. It was easy to make the connection between timid programs and the near-absence of independent production.

Among independent media producers here, the idea of a N.I.P.S. was accepted as the best way to force CPB to respond to our needs and the country's interests regarding public broadcasting. The failure of CPB to share funds with independents over the last 10 years goes a long way to explain the dire shortfall of production funding we all encounter. And what sector of the economy would not protest if they had been robbed of $350-million, the way it appears we have been shucked by CPB?

A few days later, a friend told me she had been given a list of people to contact in Santa Fe about the same campaign, but that she didn't have time to do the work. I was happy to borrow her list. I spent many hours in the next few weeks prosalytizing, hand-holding, and cahooting with my local community of film- and videomakers.

Santa Fe is among the most politically and culturally active areas in the Americas, and maybe that explains why we had little trouble putting pressure on Washington. We happen to have one of the more enlightened Congressmen, Bill Richardson, who is a member of the strategic House Telecommunications and Finance Committee. Some people I spoke with called Richardson's local office and let him know that a broad cross-section of New Mexicans were concerned about the issue. Others sent letters and mailgrams or called Richardson's Washington office. The result, we are happy to report, is that Bill Richardson has promised his "full support."

Along with our shared determination to do something about CPB's negligence, we had a couple of other concerns. It is clear to us that reforming the public television system at the top is only half the struggle, and an equal effort will be needed to open up and reform local public television stations, which have served as our immediate oppressors. Their chronic rejection of the independent film and video community cannot be overlooked, even if there is improvement on the national level.

Another point of great concern here is that N.I.P.S.—if realized—should take into account the changing demographics of media production. It is no longer the case that qualified producers and talent only reside along the East and West Coasts. The mobility of the population, the speed of communications, and the widespread availability of equipment have changed the rules of the game. Producers no longer have to live penned up in a few locations. We hope that in its final configuration N.I.P.S. will respond to the need for fresh perspectives, local color, and widespread geographic representation.

Mutual aid is an anarchistic idea, propounded by Peter Kropotkin in the nineteenth century as an antidote to the principle of survival of the fittest. For people living in a remote desert area, mutual aid becomes a natural defense. Film and video producers in New Mexico agree that this campaign is one way to help one another. Organized, we have more punch than the institutions, if we all swing at the same time.

Roger Snodgrass is an independent filmmaker whose production company is Sanjak Productions.

MARLON RIGGS

SAN FRANCISCO

Two years ago the National Independent Program Service was only a "manifesto," a "position paper," a call to arms for grassroots organizing around the creation of a "new autonomous entity for independent production." Today N.I.P.S. is part of the House bill on reauthorization of public broadcasting, now poised for full congressional action. From concept to first draft to legislative language, the Association of California Independent Public Television Producers assumed a leading role in mobilizing support for N.I.P.S.—a role ACIPTP members unanimously regard as their unique "historical imperative."

"Political organizing has always been part of independent filmmaking in the Bay Area," explains veteran media activist and ACIPTP steering committee member Larry Hall. A decade ago Hall had been one of the chief negotiators representing the independent community in what became landmark legislation guaranteeing a "substantial" share of Corporation for Public Broadcasting programming dollars to independents.

At first, Hall remembers, things went well following the 1978 legislation, especially for West Coast independents. Five of 11 programs funded under CPB's *Crisis to Crisis* series were Bay Area productions. By 1983 *Crisis to Crisis* and CPB's other independent anthology series, *Matters of Life and Death*, were defunct. Station productions and station-based program consortia now consumed major portions of CPB's Program Fund pie.

Bay Area independents suddenly found themselves in an inverse position vis-à-vis CPB. "Everyone was slinging arrows in the form of proposals to Open Solicitations," recalls Film Arts Foundation co-director Julie Mackaman, "but nobody was getting through. Bay Area producers began to experience what became an extended CPB funding drought."

"We were utterly alienated in terms of our reasons for making films and from the genres and production techniques enshrined in mainstream public television," explains Larry Daressa, president of California Newsreel and co-chair of the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers. Unlike some other regions in the country, Bay Area independents did not have cordial relations with a major producing station, nor opportunities to work within the commercial networks. The region's distinction had consequently consisted of the production of one-off, idiosyncrastic, often overtly point-of-view programs.

"The only way you can fully appreciate how far public television was falling from its noncommercial origins was to have experience with it and feel the ways in which commercialism was grinding down creativity and risk-taking and imagination," adds Daressa. "You had to have been between those millstones. Independents in the Bay Area understood what was happening. We had that experience."

That experience carried with it a growing sophistication on how to combat the alarming trend of "upscale conventionality" in public TV. On the regional level, in 1984 ACIPTP lobbied for a 10 percent set-aside for independents in state funding of California public television. In an unprecedented victory the California legislature adopted the measure. But the euphoria was short-lived, because the new Republican governor vetoed the entire public broadcasting funding package. "Still," Larry Hall reflects, "it reaffirmed what we could do when we organized and flexed our political muscle."

On the national level, relations with CPB continued to sour. Following the 1984 public broadcasting reauthorization hearings, CPB and the Na-

tional Coalition of Public Broadcasting Producers had begun thrice yearly consultative meetings ostensibly intended to resolve independents' grievances. What emerged instead was a forum in which Program Fund officers politely listened to, then politely rebuffed nearly every suggestion offered by the Coalition. "We were going nowhere," recounts ACIPTP steering committee member Howard Petrick. "Bay Area indies were still being hung out to dry. It was clear that we either had to form our own funding entity or pack up our bags and just give it all up."

Thus in early 1986 ACIPTP modified its strategy. The National Coalition meetings with CPB became less a mechanism for addressing the Program Fund than a tool of grassroots organizing around a coherent national agenda. During regular monthly meetings, ACIPTP members—independents Loni Ding and Larry Daressa, Julie Mackaman and Gail Silva of Film Arts Foundation, David Bolt of the Bay Area Video Coalition, Jim Yee of the National Asian American Telecommunications Association, Howard Petrick, Larry Hall, and myself, to name a few—brainstormed ideas to present at National Coalition meetings for discussion and action by independent representatives from other regions of the country.

Frustration with CPB's inertia had led ACIPTP away from suggestions of piecemeal reform—step-up and promotional funding, timely contracts, better scheduling, and the like—to wholesale structural changes in public broadcasting that could effectively address independents' concerns. "We knew congressional reauthorization was coming up and that a National Alliance of Media Arts Centers conference was being planned," explains Larry Hall, "so we began working on a proposal to have it ready for endorsements and political organizing."

N.I.P.S., initially described simply as "the entity," was conceived at a potluck dinner and ACIPTP/brainstorm session at the San Francisco home of Gail Silva in the spring of 1986. "The proposal grew out of our specific experience and frustration with the meetings at CPB," says National Coalition co-chair Daressa. "It's true the Carnegie Commission had made a brief mention about an 'office for independent production' in its 1979 report, but there are only two or three lines on the subject, and what the language implies was more of an ombudsman within CPB, not an autonomous program service."

Moreover, adds Film Arts Foundation co-director Mackaman, while "AIVF had floated a proposal for a 'Center for Independent Television' in earlier years, there was no attempt by ACIPTP to connect our proposal to any historical antecedent." If enacted, the ACIPTP "entity" promised that, for the first time in U.S. public broadcasting history, the independent community would be vested with the authority, outside the CPB bureaucracy, not only to fund but, as importantly, to promote, package, and assist in scheduling independent work. "Our objective," sums Daressa, "was not just a production fund for independent producers, but a full-fledged programming service promoting innovation and diversity in public television."

After numerous internal drafts, I hand-carried copies of the proposal to the Coalition/CPB meeting in August 1986, delivering drafts to the regional reps at our private strategy session on the night before the Coalition's meeting with the Program Fund. Simultaneously, ACIPTP circulated the proposal to more than 200 media arts centers nationwide for feedback and commentary. After several months of revisions, the "entity" went public. Both Film Arts Foundation and the Bay Area Video Coalition published the proposal in their respective journals, conducting special mailings within and outside their memberships.

National organizing around what would become N.I.P.S. was underway. As in 1978, Larry Hall emerged as chief coordinator in lobbying efforts to win congressional support for and counter public broadcasting opposition to what became a *National* Coalition proposal. San Francisco independent Janet Cole took an equally decisive role in overseeing regional campaigns to bring pressure on key state representatives on the House and Senate telecommunications subcommittees. On the West Coast, phone calls and letters flooded the office of Congressman Henry Waxman of Los Angeles. N.I.P.S. endorsements from Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi, the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame, the San Francisco Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, and Cine Acción, to name a few, arrived from northern California while in Hollywood influential individuals, public interest groups, and industry executives alike united in a chorus of support: Norman Lear; Peter Yarrow (of Peter, Paul and Mary); the Caucus of Producers, Writers and Directors; the Western States Black Research Center; United Auto Workers; the California Federation of the Arts; actress Esther Rolle (of *Good Times*); and California State Assemblywoman Gwen Moore. The pressure was steady, unrelenting.

Julie Mackaman concludes: "We quickly came to understand the way Washington operates is under a system of bullies and cowards, and we were not going to be cowed. And if that meant being bullies when we talked to our counterparts in a legislative arena and within CPB and PBS itself, then we would be frank. We would be bullies. It's part of the iconoloclastic style of politics and politic-making we're used to here in the Bay Area."

Marlon Riggs is a member of the ACIPTP steering committee, produced and directed Ethnic Notions *(aired in 1988 on national PBS), lectures at U.C. Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism, and recently received a CPB production grant for* Color Adjustment: Blacks in Primetime, *his sequel to* Ethnic Notions.

VICTORIA KEITH

HONOLULU

Hawaii's independent production community, like Hawaii itself, is small and scattered. At present, there is no organization or institution that brings us together or advocates on our behalf, something we need and should now begin organizing. In addition, we live in a place where, for the past 20 years or so, film and video production has meant *Hawaii 5-0* and *Magnum, P.I.* The structures that support the film/video industry in Hawaii lean in that direction rather than in encouraging local production. Indeed, at this time, finding a replacement for *Magnum* is a major concern of the State Film Office. But things are beginning to change, and some of the organizing done in relation to the proposal for a N.I.P.S. may be parlayed into a better-organized independent community here.

I first learned about the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers' movement to create an Independent Program Service from an article in the August/September 1987 issue of *The Independent*, which I didn't actually see until December. About two weeks later—New Year's Eve, to be exact—Loni Ding called me, and, in a densely-packed one-hour monologue, she explained the proposal and the strategy being developed to convince Congress to enact it. It seemed like a very appropriate conversation for the New Year after all. I agreed that several of us in Hawaii would begin to enlist support for an Independent Program Service.

Meanwhile, a friend, Ann Brandman, who is the assistant curator of

video and film at the Honolulu Academy of Arts, had been in touch with Jim Yee of the National Asian American Telecommunications Association. Together we initiated contacts with the independent community here. (Many of them, it turned out, already knew about the proposal through *The Independent.*) Janet Cole, the coordinator of the National Coalition's organizing effort, sent me piles of material along with suggested strategies for a local letter-writing campaign. That information was followed up by extensive philosophical discussions with Larry Hall, the National Coalition's lobbyist.

The process we embarked upon involved distilling complex issues regarding public television, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and the independent producing community into a brief letter addressed to our colleagues in Hawaii, amended with copies of related materials. Ann and I combined our lists of the members of the Hawaii film/video community—not very many producers, but instead a broad-based group of technicians, writers, media activists, Hawaiian activists and people with an interest in nurturing the vitality of public television, cable TV producing groups, and people who generally support film, television, the arts, and other local community and social issues. That may sound like a tremendous number of people, but in fact the list consisted of around 100 names. We asked them to write letters of support for an I.P.S. *and* for strengthening the existing Minority Program Consortia funded by CPB, one of which was designed to produce, distribute, and promote programming by and about Pacific Islanders. In theory, the Native Hawaiian producing community just taking shape here should find some support from a secure Pacific Islander consortium. In the letter we emphasized that Hawaii's Senator Dan Inouye is a key figure in this process, since he chairs the Senate Telecommunications Subcommittee. Along with its House counterpart, that subcommittee would be the site of hearings on public telecommunications during the 1987-88 legislative session.

Our letters hit home. Hawaii is a small place, and most of us in the producing community know each other. During the week following our mailing, I encountered many people who were pleased to find an opportunity to speak out about something that was important to them. Everybody I talked with had his or her own experience trying to get a program funded or shown on public television, or with advocating programming that reflects Hawaii's multi-ethnic population. So our call for support hit a nerve, and people one would never expect to "write a letter to your cZongressional delegate" actually did.

After the letters were sent to individuals, we concentrated on groups—agencies, clubs, associations, etc.—that we figured might have an interest in the future of public television. Formerly, I had worked with a nonprofit community production organization and helped produce several video programs about local issues with community organizations. All of the programs produced by this group were made by independents, and although cable was the primary means of distribution many were rebroadcast on local public TV. These organizations were willing to write letters endorsing an Independent Program Service, and they heartily supported the continuation of this kind of programming on local public television.

That was our basic campaign—contacting individuals and groups, organizing letter-writing and meetings with organizations, encouraging those people to write. At the time, our efforts seemed very indirect, but they had some impact in Inouye's office: We were later told that he personally reads every letter he receives. Although it proved difficult to meet with him in person, he had a lot of letters from us to read.

We did meet with Inouye's local administrative assistant, however, hoping that this would pave the way for a future meeting with the Senator when he was in town. It didn't, but we discovered that he seemed especially interested in the Minority Programming Service aspect of the National Coalition's proposals. A local production group, Na Maka O Ka Aina, one of whose members is an indigenous videomaker, wrote a strong defense of support for productions about Hawaiian subjects, and that statement was presented to Inouye's office as well.

At the same time, several people involved in our strategy sessions suggested that we meet with representatives of Hawaii Public Television. The thinking behind this was that, if the station was consulted by Inouye about the proposals without our having discussed the issues with them, they might not be supportive. So a meeting was scheduled, and the station's general manager and the director of news and public affairs attended, as did the State Film Branch Office director. That meeting was not particularly productive, however. This small public TV station regards itself as somewhat out of the mainstream, engaged in constant struggles to bring in enough money to fund its operations. As they later stated in a letter, they see *themselves* as "independents" and feel that they don't need to make any particular concessions to independent producers. Eventually, the station wrote Inouye a letter that expressed their lack of support for N.I.P.S. It was at that point, in particular, that I understood the need for organized, collective lobbying to guarantee public television's support of independent producers, rather than relying on the determination of solitary independent producers trying to gain recognition within the current system. And I realized that it just such experiences that lead to the formation of organizations.

In February I travelled to Washington to participate in a meeting with the National Coalition convened by CPB. The members of the Coalition from around the country spent a day meeting with congressional aides and, in some cases, with representatives. We met with Inouye's administrative assistant in Washington, who acknowledged receiving many letters from our state.

Inouye has returned to Hawaii two times since then, but I still have not been able to meet with him to discuss this issue. However, that may not be too crucial in the long run. Here, we have continued to discuss among ourselves the need to organize, to advocate on our own behalf, to communicate with other people involved with video, film, and communications in the Pacific, and to share our programs and our strategies with each other. That process is ongoing and gaining momentum. We hope to become more visible, on local public television and beyond.

Victoria Keith has been an independent producer working in Hawaii for the past 12 years. Many of her video documentaries about social, political, cultural issues in Hawaii have been broadcast on local public television and The Sand Island Story *was included in the first CPB-sponsored series for independent producers,* Matters of Life and Death

SURVIVING THE EIGHTIES: GLOBAL VILLAGE'S 14TH ANNUAL DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL

Patricia Thomson



Jonathan Demme and Jo Menell's video documentary *Haiti Dreams of Democracy* opened the Global Village 14th Annual Documentary Festival to sell-out crowds.

Courtesy Global Village

At age 14, the Global Village Annual Documentary Festival is and isn't the festival it used to be. "They are the keepers of the documentary flame," says veteran producer St. Clair Bourne, one of this year's festival judges. "They ask, 'Where is documentary going?' They organize forums for the discussion of this question. It's the only place in New York City where the discussion becomes real."

Global Village, located in a Soho loft, is one of the oldest nonprofit video production centers, founded in 1969 during video's infancy by John Reilly and Rudi Stern. Five years later Reilly, together with Ingrid Wiegand, decided Global Village should sponsor a festival. Although video art was then being shown in museums and art galleries, there were no showcases dedicated to video documentaries. Julie Gustafson, who was then an assistant at the media center, recalls, "We struggled for years to show video on an ad hoc basis, but decided a festival would be treated more seriously." Gustafson and Reilly have continued to act as directors of Global Village and its annual festival to the present.

In many respects, the festival remains the same kind of intimate gathering of documentary devotees that it was back in its early days. During this year's three-week-long festival last April, one could find film historian Erik Barnouw offering his thoughts on the role of documentary in stimulating social change or recounting how he travelled across Europe looking at films that had stirred up official displeasure—watching films banned in Hungary but stored in Yugoslav archives, banned Polish films in Belgian archives, and so on. Or one could listen to producer Ilan Ziv discussing the ethics of filming and thereby exposing to danger "subversive" Guatemalans. Or Lise Yasui, on why Asian American filmmakers have only recently produced films and tapes that describe and analyze the detention of Japanese Americans in concentration camps in the United States during World War II and other wartime experiences. At the Global Village Documentary Festival deal-making takes a back seat to the presentation and discussion of film, video, and television documentaries. And only documentaries. It is one of two festivals in this country devoted exclusively to documentary; the other is the Margaret Mead Film Festival, also held in New York City. This consistent focus is, in Gustafson's mind, a major reason behind the festival's longevity.

Both the criteria and the selection process for the festival have changed somewhat over the years, however. For the first few years, when it was solely a video festival (film and TV were added the fifth year), entries were reviewed and selected by Gustafson, Reilly, "and whoever else was there." As the number of entries grew, assistants were brought in to help with prescreening. But Reilly and Gustafson still chose the top batch. Festival judges then whittled the number down and awarded prizes. This procedure was criticized, however, as being either too closed or too informal. When funders questioned this method, the selection process became more structured. Gustafson also points to the "enormous search" now conducted by festival program director Robert Rosenberg, who calls people around the country to see what's new or in the pipeline. About a third of the works in this year's festival were solicited as a result of his search.

In addition to refining its method for making selections, the festival has become more institutionalized. Once Gustafson and Reilly's mom-and-pop operation, with several dozen folding chairs squeezed into Global Village's cramped second-floor space, it is now professionally staged at Joseph Papp's Public Theater, where a cool marble lobby and well-designed 90-seat screening room create a comfortable and prestigious setting for the event. A publicist who works at the Public handled press relations this year, bringing a new level of organization and timeliness. And for the first time a second, larger screening facility—the 230-seat May Theater at the New School for Social Research—was enlisted to accommodate the anticipated crowds.

And the crowds did come. An opening night benefit on April 7 filled the house, with well over 200 people paying $25 to see Jonathan Demme's *Haiti Dreams of Democracy*, coproduced by former BBC producer Jo Menell. (Proceeds from ticket sales were split by the festival and the National Coalition for Haitian Refugees.) Despite the mixed reviews that the videotape had received, the festival judges awarded it their Outstanding Achievement in Made-for-Television Documentary award. Some critics, however, saw it as a shallow, tourist-on-holiday view of Haitian music and politics, and were annoyed that it had been chosen to open the festival rather than a stronger, more substantial work. But the audience that night seemed to love Demme's latest. Perhaps many had come to see Demme—of *Melvin and Howard*, *Stop Making Sense*, and *Something Wild* fame—in person and go to the post-screen-



In Sandra King's *Newark: The Slow Road Back*, Crystal Spellman points to a window where her mother was mistaken for a sniper and shot by a policemen 20 years ago, during the Newark riots.

Courtesy Global Village

ing party and Caribbean buffet at the Limelight nightclub. When asked, why Demme?, Gustafson responds, "We thought it was a wonderful film. And we wanted to draw attention to the opening night of the festival and to make some money—which we did."

This is not to say that the Global Village Annual Documentary Festival has gone commercial. Alongside *Haiti* were works like *The Journey*, Peter Watkins' 14-hour opus on the nuclear age. This nonlinear film cuts between scenes shot in the Scottish Highlands to French Polynesia to West Germany and so on around the world, showing to what extent the military-industrial complex has taken root globally. No one expected this to be a box office draw. The four-hour segment that I attended attracted only several dozen people—even though former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark was there to introduce the film. Gustafson admits the Public Theater did some "good-natured complaining" when *The Journey* appeared on their line-up. "Attendance is more important to them, given their overhead," she says, immediately adding that the Public was quick to grasp the importance of giving works like *The Journey* a theatrical run. "We can't abandon works that are really on the edge," Gustafson insists.

In general, however, attendance figures were up this year, with half the screenings selling out. Among the box office hits was the double bill *Mama's Pushcart: Ellen Stewart and 25 Years of La Mama Etc.*, by Demetria Royals and Louise Diamond, and *A Bailar! The Journey of a Latin Dance Company*, by Catherine Calderon and Lloyd Goldfine. Kate Davis' verité film *Girl Talk*, a portrait of three teens—runaway, sexually abused, and pregnant—also attracted audiences. So, too, did the double bill *Fire From the Mountain*, by veteran producer Deborah Shaffer and Adam Friedson, and *Chela: Love, Dreams and Struggle in Chile*, by Lars Palmgren, Goran Gester, and Lars Bildt.

All of these works were shown at the May Theater, the festival organizers correctly anticipating larger audience numbers. One film that didn't fill that hall was *Inheritance*, by Bill Donovan, which nevertheless proved very intriguing. Originally Donovan intended to make a film about some of his elementary schoolmates in Scarsdale, New York, a number of whom went on to become celebrities. Instead he got drawn into the barren, destructive life of Mike Hernstadt. Brought up in opulent wealth with emotionally distant parents, this poor little rich boy grew up to be a wild-man and "a fighting candidate" who ran for public office in Colorado and lost largely because he punched a woman during the campaign. He also beat his wife, shot cows from a moving car for sport, and finally, in a denouement that the filmmaker never predicted, was gunned down himself. Donovan, who shot footage of Hernstadt on and off for over seven years, constructs a complex psychological portrait of this failed candidate. Hernstadt is full of himself; he postures and pontificates for the camera, flaunting his affluence and yuppie attitudes. But Donovan digs deep and manages to show what is behind Hernstadt's pain and anger—a pathetic, neglected childhood and a rejection which made national headlines—being refused entry to a Scarsdale debutante ball because he was part Jewish. While Hernstadt's life might sound like grist for the tabloids, the film does not make judgements. But what it shows is disturbing—a child destroyed, and a man like Hernstadt so close to political office.

Back at the Public, a favorite was *Dear America: Letters Home from Vietnam*, by Bill Couturie. This HBO production had been televised earlier in the spring and received critical accolades from the cable industry. Its screening at the festival was its New York City theatrical premiere. *Dear America* opens in theaters this fall—the first time a made-for-cable film has gotten a theatrical run *after* appearing on television. Its popularity probably owes much to the sixties hit tunes and an all-star cast—letters are read by Michael J. Fox, Robert DeNiro, Martin Sheen, Tom Berenger, Willem Dafoe, Sean Penn, Kathleen Turner, et al. The use of such actors (who never appear on screen) isn't particularly necessary for the material. As Couturie admitted in an interview published in the Bay Area newsletter *Release Print*,

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he decided to use over 30 movie stars in his documentary in order to get Hollywood studios to stop telling him, "Wonderful film, but do you know how to work with actors?" What is a far stronger and, by its nature, a much more specific component of the film than the letters is the archival footage, which includes TV news clips and the GI's home movies and snapshots.

Global Village's continuing commitment to showing responsible, intelligent works made by television news departments—and they do exist—as well as independent productions for television is one of the festival's great merits. In the past, alongside Robert Drew or Richard Ellison, one might find Bill Moyers or Robert Thurber. When the festival gave Moyers a mini-retrospective several years ago, he told the audience that such recognition from independents was far more rewarding than any awards offered by his industry peers. The festival also includes a few documentary programs from local stations, which would otherwise not be seen by New York City audiences.

This year one such program was *Newark: The Slow Road Back*, by Sandra King of the New Jersey News Network. It is a TV news documentary about urban problems that doesn't picture the drug trade, prostitution, or other easily sensationalized aspects of city life as the whole story. *Newark* begins with the city's riots of 1967, analyzing why they began and whether conditions have improved since. It looks at the economic revitalization of downtown Newark, where construction is booming, business moving back, and a condominium market developing. Most local news stories would end here. King, however, talks to city officials *and* displaced home-owners, who speak of Newark's gentrification an "assault by progress." She examines the loss of the middle class and the continuing depth of poverty, and discusses drugs and AIDS in this context. The program also directly examines accusations of racism in the police force, then and now, which like gentrification is an issue that TV news usually sidesteps. It is a solid, thorough news documentary which does not abide "infotainment" clichés.

The award for Outstanding Achievement in Documentary Film was given to Christine Choy and Renee Tajima's *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* This is no murder mystery. At the outset, Chin's killer is identified as Ronald Erens, a foreman at a Chrysler auto plant who—in the company of his adult son—attacked Chin with a baseball bat. They stalked their victim, a Chinese American automotive draftsman, following a bar-room brawl, during which Erens mistook Chin for Japanese and shouted, "Because of motherfuckers like you we're out of work." But Tajima and Choy do not stop at the easy explanation. The cause of Chin's death is more complex than one man's blood lust or xenophobia. It lies in the cultural terrain—Detroit, in the midst of a depression, where citizens sledge-hammer Japanese cars for TV news crews—and is exacerbated by an overtaxed and still racist judicial system. Though

paced like a dramatic thriller, *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* doesn't end like one. In this story, there is no happy resolution of justice attained.

This year, screenings were not all that the festival had to offer. Also on the agenda was a two-day seminar on documentary, which included sessions on making political documentaries today, versus 10 to 20 years ago; documentary as history; and switching from documentary to drama—plus more practical sessions on cinematography and on fundraising and distribution. Sitting on the panels were two producers with works in this year's festival—Tajima and Ilan Ziv—as well as other well-known producers like Emile de Antonio and Barbara Kopple. Says Gustafson, "We wanted to be doing some mentoring—encouraging young people by talking with established documentary producers. It was meant to be inspirational." With a price tag of $100-125 per person, it was also meant to help the festival stabilize financially.

"All of these things—the benefit, the seminar—are part of a multi-pronged effort to be an institution that's stable without John and me," Gustafson explains. "The main thing is, we can't rely on public funding and we have to find some larger setting." Soon, perhaps before next year's festival, Gustafson will have gotten a new institute for documentary studies underway. It will be an accredited part of Media Studies at the New School, and will have as its purpose "the critical study, practice, and exhibition of the documentary form." As Gustafson describes the plan, "We're getting a lot of overhead services and space from the New School. What we're giving in exchange are highly visible exhibitions, and, secondly, we're going to teach. We'll bring together a number of courses that already exist—in the film, anthropology, and literature departments and video from Global Village, John's classes—under one banner, and really have a place for people to study documentary." The Global Village Documentary Festival will be a function of the new institute. Gustafson, who will act as executive director, believes it will take from six to 12 months to get the institute in full swing. Such an institute, with its tuition, in-kind services, and teaching salaries, should solve the festival's ongoing dilemma of financial viability. "It's a positive development," Gustafson affirms, adding, "It is absolutely a matter of survival."

The 15th Global Village Annual Documentary Festival will take place in spring 1989. Cash awards of $500 each go to outstanding achievement in documentary film & documentary video; honorary award for outstanding achievement in made-for-TV documentary. Cats: video & film, reserved for independents & TV, open to producers working in public, network & cable TV. Work must be completed since 1986. Entry fee: $25. Formats: 16mm, 3/4"; preview on 1/2". Deadline: Nov. 30. Contact: Robert Rosenberg, Media Studies Program, New School for Social Research, 2 W. 13 St., 12th fl., New York, NY 10011; (212) 741-8903.

IN BRIEF

The "In Brief" listings are compiled by Kathryn Bowser, director of **FIVF's Festival Bureau**. Listings do not constitute an endorsement & since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for furthrer information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

ATHENS VIDEO FESTIVAL, Apr. 28-May 6, OH. Scheduled for October, fest has been canceled & will now be part of Athens Int'l Film Fest, next in April. New deadline for entries: Feb. 10. Contact: Craig Stevens, fest director, Athens Video Festival, Box 388, Athens, OH 45701; (614) 593-1330.

DALLAS VIDEO FESTIVAL, Nov. 3-6, TX. Theme of 2nd edition of fest is "technology past & future." Several featured programs incl. section on JFK (commemorating 25th yr. since assassination); int'l program w/ 1 video from each country represented; women's video art; program & workshop on small formats; installations (possibly interactive). All works projected rather than on monitors. Other features incl. programs at Stark Club, late night programs & performance art w/ video at museum & around city. Fest particuiarly interested in new women's work. Deadline: Oct. 15. Contact: Barton Weiss, fest director, 1611 Rio Vista Dr., Dallas, TX 75208; (214) 948-7300.

ONION CITY EXPERIMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 1-7, IL. 5th annual showcase for experimental films up to 30 min. long. Entries seen by judges & public over 1st 6 days of fest, screened in Chicago loft; award winners screened at Film Center of Art Institute of Chicago on final day. $2,000 cash prizes. Formats: 16mm, super 8, 8mm. Entry fee: $15. Deadline: Oct. 15. Contact: Experimental Film Coalition, 927 Noyes St., Evanston, IL 60201; (312) 869-7664/252-5681.

WOMEN IN THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Mar. 9-12, IL. In 8th yr, int'l fest of films & videos produced &/or directed by women annually features program representing cultural diversity, quality & scope. Animation, computer graphics, docs, experimental, narrative & personal films & tapes of any length considered; work must be produced since 1985. Jury selects work incl. in fest & prescreens on 3/4" or 1/2" only. Entry fee: $20. Deadline: Oct. 15. Contact: Women in the Director's Chair, 3435 N. Sheffield Ave., Suite 3, Chicago, IL 60657; (312) 281-4988.

FOREIGN

BRUSSELS INTERNATIONAL SUPER 8 FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, November, Belgium. "Open to all forms of creativity without discrimination & to all categories of film," this competitive fest, celebrating 10th anniv., seeks to "encourage & develop a permanent basis of promotion & exchanges between super 8 cinemas & videos of all countries." Films preselected by int'l jury. Videos must be shot on nonprofessional equipment. Prizes incl. cash & equipment. Film/videomaker pays

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transportation. No entry fee. Formats: super 8, 8mm video, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Oct. 30. Contact: Festival International du Film Super 8 et Video, rue P.E. Janson, 12, 1050 Brussels, Belgium; tel: (02) 649 3340.

CINEMA DU REEL INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY & SOCIAL DOCUMENTATION, Mar. 4-12, France. Well-respected annual competitive showcase for 20-25 recent ethnographic & sociological doc films, each shown several times during fest in order to reach as wide an audience as possible. In addition to int'l competition, fest focuses on geographic region. 11th edition will highlight films of the USSR & 1990 will focus on India. Films must be completed btwn Jan. 1, 1987 & Dec. 31, 1988. Prizes: Prix Cinéma du Réel (30,000FF), Prix du Court métrage (10,000FF) & Prix des bibliothèques (30,000FF). In 1988, US ind. filmmaker Jennifer Fox took top award for *Beirut: The Last Home Movie*. Films should be subtitled in French. No entry forms sent out; send avail. info on film & fest will decide if appropriate for preview. Last yr, in assoc. w/ Alliance Française, fest traveled to NYC w/ selection of films shown in Paris. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4". Deadline: Nov. 1. Contact: Suzette Glenadel, déleguée générale, Bureau du Festival Cinéma du Réel, 19, rue du Renard, B.P.I., 75197 Paris Cedex 04, France; tel: 42771233; telex: CNAC GP 212 726.

FILMS DE FEMMES INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF CRETEIL, March, France. Creteil, a Paris suburb, hosts fest, the world's 1st women's film fest, which has become a premiere showcase for new films directed by women. 1988 edition attracted audiences of 26,000, incl. 250 journalists, several distribs & buyers, festival reps & about 40 filmmakers attending w/ work. Over 150 films shown. Program incl. competition sections for feature fiction, feature doc & short fiction & nonfiction films, as well as info sections encompassing tributes, retrospectives & sidebars of awarded films from other Euro fests. All films shown 3 times. 1989 edition to incl. retro of films by women of color. Cash & equipment prizes: 10,000FF prix de publique in each cat & 2 jury prizes of 5,000FF to feature films. Each filmmaker holds press conference to discuss not only her film but also thematic, critical & philosophical issues related to women's films. This yr's preselection will again be made at FIVF by fest's US rep., who accepts 16mm, 3/4" (strongly preferred) & 1/2" for preview. Fest format: 35mm, 16mm. Films must be directed or co-directed by women, completed since June 1, 1987 & not theatrically released in France, broadcast on French TV, or shown at other French film festivals. Student productions not eligible. All subjects, genres & styles considered. Fest pays for accommodations (3 days) for participating filmmakers, as well as round-trip shipping for films selected through FIVF. Films should have French translation, synopsis & publicity & biographical materials. Entry fee: $15 per submission (payable to FIVF). Deadline: Nov. 25. For info & appl, contact FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., New York, NY 10012; (212) 473-3400.

ROTTERDAM INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 27-Feb. 4, Netherlands. Int'l film community was shaken by sudden death on July 13 of Hubert Bals, Rotterdam Film Festival founder & director. Fest, one of world's leading noncompetitive showcases for ind. film, will continue in '89 as tribute to Bals, w/ selection of films chosen by him before his death. No additional films will be selected. Plans are to invite about 40 filmmakers who were "sons & daughters" of fest & regular guests over the years, who will be asked to attend & screen one of their films & to include retrospectives of films by Jacques Rivette & John Cassavetes.

Bals, born in Utrecht in 1937, was invited to form 1st Rotterdam Film Festival in 1972. His 1st program attracted audiences of 5,000. Since then it steadily expanded & in 1988 attracted over 150,000 enthusiasts. Fest always carried Bals' imprint. With commitment to independent filmmakers, Bals always looked for new talent & cinematic directions & was among 1st to show films by Jim Jarmusch, Mark Rappaport, Wim Wenders, Chen Kaige, Spike Lee & Sergei Paradjanov (who attended last yr on his 1st trip outside Soviet Union). He also inaugurated other special programs, among them "New Projects" program to assist independent filmmakers—particularly 3rd World producers—in obtaining distribution advances & coproduction money, Cinemart, independent film market & Directors for the Future award, for which int'l jury of 100 film professionals selected slate of 20 top film directors. Rotterdam established firm tradition of congeniality & interaction btwn filmmakers & much of that tradition was molded by Bals.



ALEXANDER KLUGE RETROSPECTIVE

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The Goethe Institutes in the United States and Canada and their local partners present the first North American retrospective of the films by Alexander Kluge, organized by GOETHE HOUSE NEW YORK in cooperation with the ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES, New York. The retrospective is curated by Stuart Liebman, Queens College, CUNY.

LOCATION	PARTNER	DATES	INFORMATION
Goethe House, New York	Anthology Film Archives	October 18–30, 1988	(212) 744-8310
Goethe Institute, Ann Arbor	Cleveland Cinematheque	November 14–19	(313) 996-8600
Goethe Institute, Chicago	Film Center of the Art Institute of Chicago and Walker Art Center, Minneapolis	November 11–December 17 November 9–30	(312) 329-0915
Goethe Institute, Atlanta	in house	January 9–26, 1989	(404) 892-2388
Goethe Institute, Toronto	Art Gallery of Ontario	January 30–February 18	(416) 924-3327
Goethe Institute, Montreal	Cinematheque Quebecoise	February 20–March 6	(514) 499-0159
Goethe Institute, Boston	Museum of Fine Arts, Harvard University, Amherst College	March 9–23	(617) 262-6050
Goethe Institute, Houston	Rice Media Center	March 27–April 8	(713) 528-2787
Goethe Institute, San Francisco	Pacific Film Archive and UC Berkeley	April 4–May 26 (joint dates with Los Angeles)	(415) 391-0370
Goethe Institute, Los Angeles	U. of California Film Archive		(213) 854-0993
Goethe Institute, Vancouver	Pacific Cinematheque	May 29–June 8	(604) 732-3966

CLASSIFIEDS

The Independent's **Classifieds** column includes all listings for "Buy • Rent • Sell," "Freelancers" & "Post-production" categories. It is restricted to members only. Each entry has a **250 character limit** & costs **$15 per issue.** Ads exceeding this length will be edited. Payment must be made at the time of submission. Anyone wishing to run a classified ad more than once must pay for each insertion & indicate the number of insertions on the submitted copy. Each classified ad must be typed, double-spaced & worded exactly as it should appear.

Deadlines for **Classifieds** will be respected. These are the 8th of each month, **two months** prior to the cover date, e.g., October 8 for the December issue. Make check or money order—no cash, please—payable to FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

Buy • Rent • Sell

MAKE MORE MONEY: *Independent Film & Videomakers Guide*, *Home Video*, *Film/Video Budgets*, *Fade In: The Screenwriting Process*, $18.70 ea. postpaid. *Hollywood Gift Catalog* (joke book), $6.70 ea. Michael Wiese, Box 406, Westport, CT 06881.

16MM MAGNETIC FILM TRANSFERS by mail: 1/4", cassette, sync or wild, $0.0133/ft ($10 minimum charge); Scotch 16mm polyester fullcoat, $0.04/ft. Shipping extra. Fast service. Write or call: Motion Media, 203 W. Holly, Suite M15, Bellingham, WA 98225; (206) 676-2528.

TIRED OF DEAD BATTERIES? We custom design packs that run portable equipment for up to 12 hours or more. Safe, low weight, rechargeable, inexpensive and built especially for your gear and style. Compugenesis, (718) 937-7061.

WANTED: J.K. OPTICAL PRINTER: All gates, sequencer. Contact P. Hutton, Bard College, Annandale, NY 12504; (914) 758-6822, ext. 253.

ARRIFLEX 16BL CAMERA, 12-120mm zoom lens, 2-400' magazines, universal motor, periscope viewfinder, T-handle, zoom rod, power cable, light meter, body brace, metal case. Excellent condition. Contact Ralph at (718) 284-0223.

FOR SALE: CP 16 with Angenieux 12-120mm zoom lens, 2 mags, 2 batteries with chargers, Haliburton case, Nagra III, Lowell light kit, $3,500. Also Bolex with Angenieux 12-120 zoom & 10mm, case, 400' mag, sync variable speed motor, etc., $1,500. (212) 675-4218.

FOR RENT in your space, complete Sony 5850, 5800, RM440 off-line. Anvil cases. Reasonable. For Sale: 8-plate Steenbeck. 1000' rewind, coreboard, reinforced carrying handles. VG cond. Must sell. $10,500/BO. (718) 624-1672.

3/4" VIDEO PROD PKG FOR SALE: Sony 3 chip 3CCD video camera, model DXC-3000, w/ Canon 15 x 9.5 zoom lens; Sony VO 6800 U-Matic portable deck w/ batts, charger, AC power adaptor: ITE H50 tripod w/ fluid head; Lowell light kit TO-97. Excellent condition, less than 1 yr old. Best offer. Alison, (212) 757-0689.

FOR SALE: used 16mm cameras (Bolexes, zoom Beaulieu, Oricon sound camera, others), sound synchronizers, rewinds, tripods, quartz lights, more. Call (212) 675-1339 for appointment.

FOR SALE: Custom program for programmable calculator to compute parallel synch between 2 synchronous cameras with different time-codes (drop or non-drop). (212) 226-2462.

FOR SALE: Used 16mm 6-plate Moviola, 4-plate Steenbeck, film, video cameras, projector, editing equipment, more. Call for list. Columbia Univ. Film Div., (212) 280-2815 or write Film Division, 513 Dodge Hall, Columbia, 116th & Broadway, NY, NY 10027.

Freelancers

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CAMERAMAN w/ own equipment available. 16 SR, 35 BL, superspeed lenses, sound equipment, lighting van, passport, certified scuba diver. Speak French, a little Spanish. Call (212) 929-7728.

MIAMI—PM/COORDINATOR: Features/commercials/music, film/video, crews/equipment/post/locations: Have the elements of your shoot in place and happening when you arrive in So. FLA. Competent, professional service. Contact: David W. Betterton, (305) 274-9144 or 271-3271.

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Award-winning producer/director specializes in social issue oriented documentaries, industrials, commercials and dramatic endeavors. Broadcast or industrial, video or film. Have crew, equipment, and good contacts. Willing to negotiate or bid on projects. Call (212) 316-6682.

S-VHS INDUSTRIAL CAMCORDER SHOOT w/ lights, mics, radio mic. Tripod and cameraman: $200/day. Includes free dub to 3/4" or VHS w/ timecode. 3/4" editing $25/hr, incl. Amiga 2000 char gen, timecode reader/gen, live camera & editor. Also window dubs, transfers, burns. Michael, Electronic Visions, (212) 691-0375.

SUPER VHS: Location package and cuts-only editing. Excellent rates. (718) 858-5090. SotP Productions.

3/4" VIDEO PRODUCTION: 3-tube Sony cameras, tripods, lights, audio, van, experienced cameraman. Very reasonable rates. Smart Video (212) 877-5545.

PRODUCTION MANAGER/COORDINATOR: Two years commercial experience, looking to move into low-budget independent features as a Unit Manager or Coordinator. Call Bob at (718) 278-4521.

SCRIPTS WANTED: Comic treatment of contemporary social problems/issues for feature length film. Include SASE for script return and mail to: Scripts, 4009 Wexford Drive, Kensington, MD 20895.

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LOOKING FOR HELP? Are the odds against you? Give me a call if you need help in camera, sound, lighting or editing. I have the equipment and the know-how to get the job done. Contact Ralph at (718) 284-0223.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY/OPERATOR w/ feature film/commercial experience. Self-owned 35mm, 16mm camera systems, lights, electrical, sync sound recording/playback system. Lowest rates in tri-state area! Call (201) 798-8467.

SCRIPTWRITING ASSISTANCE: Looking for professional screenwriter to collaborate on feature-length project already underway. Call Jenny Lynn, (215) 925-8967.

NEED PRODUCTION MANAGER? AD, script supervisor or location manager? Producer w/ 12+ yrs exp. running own production co. specializing in corporate/industrial and (recently) doc work seeks horizon-broadening opportunities working for someone else. Please call (914) 967-0994.

SOUND RECORDIST/SOUND EDITOR: Complete Nagra package w/ mikes. Own Steenbeck editing room for sound cutting jobs. Lots of experience in doc & narrative. Good rates. Cathy Calderon, (212) 580-2075.

WANTED: Women w/ filmmaking & fundraising backgrounds to help create a women's issues film related to the sacred and empowering nature of our menstrual periods. Contact: Judith Barr, Box 677, Bethel, CT, 06801; (203) 797-8004.

CINEMATOGRAPHER & SOUND person to work on independent films. Alina/Vincent, (718) 729-7481.

Postproduction

NEGATIVE MATCHING: 16mm, super 16, 35mm. Credits include Jim Jarmusch, Wim Wenders & Lizzie Borden. Reliable results at reasonable rates. One White Glove, Tim Brennan, 225 Lafayette St., #914, New York, NY 10012; (212) 966-9484.

BOB BRODSKY & TONI TREADWAY: Super 8 & 8mm film-to-video mastering with scene-by-scene color correction to 3/4", 1" & Betacam. By appointment only. Call (617) 666-3372.

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16MM FLATBEDS FOR RENT: 6-plate flatbeds for rent in your workspace or fully equipped downtown editing room w/ 24-hour access. Cheapest rates in NYC for independent filmmakers. Call Philmaster Productions (212) 873-4470.

FREE USE: 3/4" Sony video editing system, plus Betacam, in exchange for temporary or long-term housing of award-winning producer who is moving to NYC. Living room couch okay. Call Gary, (202) 723-4567, 7:30am - 11:30pm.

BROADCAST QUALITY VIDEO EDITING 3/4"-3/4" Sony BVU-800s BVE 3000 Editor TBCs, switcher, slo-mo, freeze frames. Chyron graphics. With editor. 900 sq. ft. studio w/ lighting/sound/camera. $50/hr commercial, $35/hr. indies. Downtown Brooklyn, A&S (718) 802-7750.

16MM EDITING ROOM: Fully equipped w/ 6-plate Steenbeck & 24-hr access. Secure, convenient Upper West Side location (across street from Lincoln Center). Reasonable rates. Call Jeff Winotsky Productions, (212) 971-5637.

RENTAL AVAILABLE: 3/4" Sony 5800-5850 off-line editing room. Good rates. 24-hour access. Midtown location. Call (212) 947-1395.

RENTAL AVAILABLE: 16mm 6-plate flatbed moviola editing room. Fully equipped. Good rates. 24-hour access. Midtown location. Call (212) 947-1395.

BETACAM SP & 1/2" OFF-LINE EDITING: Experienced editor. Have 1/2" off-line equipment to rent or perform your off-line. I am production mgr. and editor at a Betacam on-line facility and can negotiate rates. Camera rental available. Specialize in documentaries. Good rates. Call (212) 316-6682.

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AVAILABLE FOR RENT: VHS and 3/4" off-line editing, comfortable suites, convenient location near express stop. Lots of shelf space. Negotiable rates starting $15 and $20 per hour. Weekly and monthly deals available. 7am-11:30pm Mon-Fri, 8am-6pm Sat and Sun. (212) 477-6009.

WHY RENT STUDIO TIME? $699.95 character generator works on all NTSC signals! 15-day moneyback/1 yr. unconditional guarantees! Studio/Industrial Model $899.95. Free details: Pacific Paradise Publication, 1164 Bishop, #124, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813.

QUALITY FILM MIXING: $100/hr 16mm or 35mm up to 8 tracks mag or stripe. Transfers from all formats to 16/35. Dubbing/voice recording with/without pix. "We've been doing it right for 25 years." V&W/Cutting Edge, 630 Ninth Ave. (at 44 St.), (212) 757-5221.

INTERFORMAT EDIT SUITE: JVC 8250 editor, 5550 player, RM 86U controller, (2) BR-8600 VHS editors, monitors. Low hrs. $9,500 or b.o. ENG outfit: Hitachi Z-31 camera w/ 15:1 lens, Sony 6800 deck, Ultra-light, batts. Mint condition. $6,000 or b.o. (717) 435-0592.

FOR RENT: 6-plate Steenbeck. Long term preferred (3 mo. or more) in your home or studio. Excellent rate. May also be available in October with my apartment sublet. Call (212) 874-7255 for information.

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NOTICES

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. **The Independent** reserves the right to edit for length.

Deadlines for **Notices** will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date, e.g., October 8 for the December issue. Send to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Conferences • Workshops

INDEPENDENT IMAGES CONFERENCE II: Conf. Promoting Art & Business of Feature Filmmaking in S.W. cosponsored by S.W. Alternative Media Project & Stages Repertory Theatre, Oct. 27-30 at Stages Rep & Allen Park Inn, Houston, TX. Incl. sessions on screenwriting, film scoring, financing, distribution, directing, theater-film translation & screenings. Registration info & schedule: IIC2, c/o SWAMP, 1519 W. Main, Houston, TX 77006; (713) 522-8592/522-0165.

COPYRIGHT CLINICS: Sponsored by CA Lawyers for the Arts on 2nd & 4th Sats of each month during 1988, except Nov. 26 & Dec. 24. Drop-in consultations for artists of all disciplines w/ noted copyright attorney about how to complete U.S. copyright appl. forms & related questions such as work-for-hire arrangements, jointly held copyrights & renewing & modifying copyrights. Contact: CA Lawyers for the Arts, Fort Mason, Bldg. C, San Francisco, CA 94123; (415) 775-7200.

MEDIA ALLIANCE ANNUAL CONFERENCE: Scheduled for Oct. 27-29 in New York City, will coincide with 20th anniv. celebration of Film/Video Arts. Contact: Media Alliance, c/o WNET, 356 W. 58th St., New York, NY; (212) 560-2919.

ANTICOMMUNISM & THE U.S.: HISTORY & CONSEQUENCES: Int'l conference sponsored by the Institute for Media Analysis, held at Harvard, Cambridge, MA, Nov. 11-13. Conf. fee: $75 regular; $35 students. Contact: Corinne Rafferty, conf. dir., Institute for Media Analysis, 145 W. 4th St., New York, NY 10012; (212) 254-1061.

FILM/VIDEO ARTS FALL COURSES: Low-cost, prof. instruction in film & video prod., video editing, screenwriting, directing, fund-raising, prod. mgmt., audio synchronization for video, lighting, sound & more. Scholarship assistance available for Blks, Latinos, Asians & Native Americans. Contact: Media Training, F/VA, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003; (212) 673-9361.

Films • Tapes Wanted

LESBIAN & GAY VIDEO SERIES: Downtown Community TV's Video Screening Series seeks 3/4", 1/2" VHS & Beta, NTSC standard videos for screenings to be held Tues. Nov. 1 & 8. Deadline: Oct. 15. Send tapes & return postage to: Maria Beatty, community screening dir., DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 966-4510.

MORE LESBIAN & GAY TAPES & FILMS WANTED: For exhibition in fall '89 at Collective for Living Cinema in NYC. Work of any length or style will be previewed by programmers. Deadline: Dec. 15. Send VHS copy, w/ stamped, self-addressed mailer for return shipping to: Collective for Living Cinema, 52 White St., New York, NY 10013, attn: J. Walsh. No telephone inquiries.

SELECT MEDIA, exclusive distributor for O.D.N. Prods, is seeking quality health & educational film & video titles for distribution. Traditional & nontraditional distrib methods explored (corporate sponsorship, free loan programs, underwriting). Send tapes to: Select Media, 74 Varick St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 431-8923.

INDEPENDENT FOCUS, WNET/13 seeks submissions of films & videos by US independents. Accepts 16mm prints w/ optical sound & 3/4" cassettes on any subject, all genres & lengths. Pay $65/min., premiere broadcast in NY metro area. Contact: Faith Kiermaier, Independent Focus, WNET/13, 356 W. 58th St., New York, NY 10019; (212) 560-2917.

ELIZA PRODUCTIONS seeks film footage of women's liberation demonstrations from 1968-73 for doc on history of abortion rights movement. If you have home movies or still photos, contact: Ninia Baehr, Box 335 Canal St. Sta., New York, NY 10013-0335; (212) 226-9642.

NEW AMERICAN MAKERS seeks work of video artists for exhibition series. Selection comm. reviews tapes monthly. Send preview VHS or 3/4" w/ program description & bio to New American Makers, 442 Shotwell St., San Francisco, CA 94110.

COE FILM ASSOCIATES acquiring short films, docs, specials, features & series of all subjects, genres & lengths for all ages. Distributes independently produced film & video to all TV/electronically transmitted markets & territories. Contact: Beverly Freeman or Susan Eenigenburg, 65 E. 96th St., New York, NY 10128; (212) 831-5355.

INDEPENDENT'S COLLECTIVE SHOWCASE seeks short films & videos for collection of work by various artists to be distributed on videocassette. All genres considered, all formats accepted. Contributors to be paid for selected work. Send VHS copy w/ self-addressed, stamped return mailer, or for more info send SASE to: I.C.S., Box 16069, Encino, CA 91416; (818) 609-9882.

ARTCOM seeks innovative video for 1988/89 exhibition & broadcast programming seasons & VHS distribution. Looking for 3/4" video for closed-circuit exhibition & broadcast, incl. computer graphics, language, dance, music video, performance & rugged experimental. Seeks wide range of art-related work for VHS distribution to consumer, educ. & retail markets. Send VHS preview copies w/ supporting docs & return postage (please ship in bubble pack bags only) to: Carl Loeffler, director, ArtCom, Box 3123 Rincon Annex, San Francisco, CA 94119-3123; (415) 431-7524.

INPUT, the annual public television screening conference, will take place in Stockholm, Sweden, from May 21-27, 1988. Those interested in attending and/or submitting programs should contact the US National Program Coordinator for information: Sandie Pedlow,

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South Carolina Educational Television Network, P.O. Drawer L, Columbia, SC 29250; (803) 737-3447. Deadline for entry forms & 3/4" cassettes of US programs: Oct. 15, 1988.

MIND'S EYE FILMS seeks short & feature-length sci-fi, action/adventure, horror, comedy or "strange stories" for video release. Send VHS copy with SASE to: Mind's Eye Films, Box 124, 19528 Ventura Blvd., Tarzana, CA 91356; (818) 360-6023.

Opportunities • Gigs

WESTCHESTER-BASED FILMMAKER wants to meet others in area interested in all facets & genres of motion pics. Contact: Jonathan Kaplan afts & eves; (914) 948-3447.

DOCUMENTARY ON ADULT ADOPTEES: Producer seeks assistants or subjects for doc on adult adoptees in intimate relationships, 18 yrs or older. Willing to travel to meet you. Everything confidential. Contact: Skye Marc Ohara Dicker, 1 Congress St., #B10, Jersey City, NJ 07307; (201) 714-9522.

EXPERIENCED VIDEO PRODUCER needed by nonprofit org. for 15 min. doc. on public school internship program, during fall/winter 1988. Contact: Ingrid Lorch, College for Human Services, 345 Hudson St., New York, NY 10014; (212) 989-2002, ext. 218.

ASST. PROFESSOR OF MEDIA & THEATER ARTS: tenure trk position in motion pic/video option for appointment beginning Jan. 1, 1989. Submit letter of appl., complete current vitae, references & samples of work to: Dan Hart, Chair, Search Comm. #4, Dept. of Media & Theatre Arts, Montana State U., Bozeman, MT 59717.

FILM/VIDEO ARTS seeks part-time instructors for evening & weekend courses in film & video prod., directing, fundraising, prod. mgmt, lighting, sound & screenwriting. Send resumé only to: Media Training, F/VA, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003.

WOMEN MAKE MOVIES: Positions available for associate director & distribution coordinator for nonprofit, feminist media ctr supporting the prod., promotion & distribution of films & videos by & about women. Send resumés only to: Debra Zimmerman, WMM, 225 Lafayette St., #211, New York, NY 10012.

Publications • Software

SPLEEN: Publ. devoted to experimental & alternative cinema seeks writing & visuals, incl. criticism, storyboards, correspondence, stills, interviews & diatribes. Deadline: Dec. 1, 1988 for May, 1989 publication. Contact: Spleen, Innis Film Society, 2 Sussex Ave., Toronto, M5S 1A1, Canada; (416) 588-8940; 978-7790.

WAVEFORMS: *Video/Japan* is a selection of innovative video from Japan focusing on persistence of tradition & embracing of new technology, organized by ArtCom & S.F. Museum of Modern Art. Incls computer graphics, doc, experimental image research, music video, performance, theater & video art. Contact: ArtCom, Box 3123 Rincon Annex, San Francisco, CA 94119-3123; (415) 431-7524.

TACTICAL POSITIONS: Video exhibition of five "disquieting" videos by B. Levy/W. Reynolds, Kim Ingraham, Paul McCarthy & Chris Kraus now available for rent w/ catalogs from Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions.

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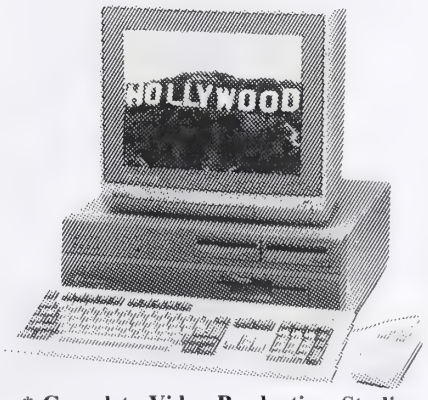
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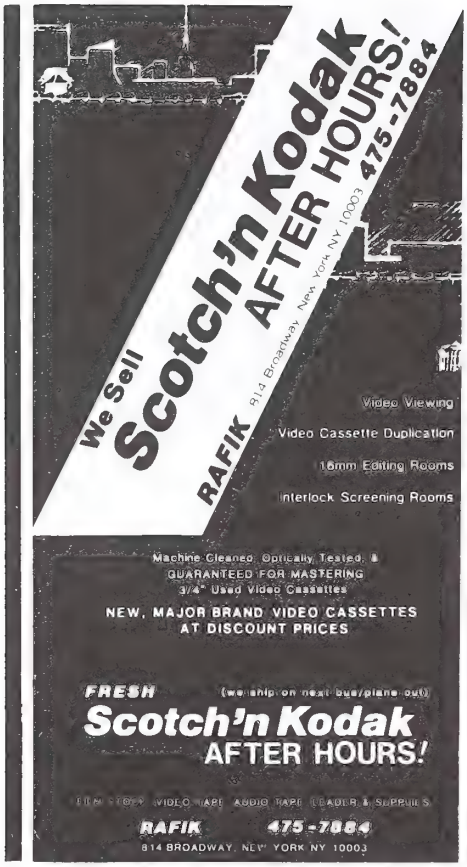
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PUBLICATIONS FROM 3RD WORLD RESOURCES: *Latin America & Caribbean: A Directory of Resources* & *Women in the Third World: A Directory of Resources*, compiled & edited by Thomas P. Fenton & Mary J. Heffron. Price: $9.95 plus $1.50 postage & handling each. Contact: Third World Resources, 464 19th St., Oakland, CA 94612.

PARTICIPATE'S *Directory of Public Access Cable Channels & Related Video Resources in NY State* now available. $12/copy. Contact: Alternative Media Info Ctr., 121 Fulton St., 5th fl., New York, NY 10038; (212) 619-3455.

Resources • Funds

ERIK BARNOUW AWARD: Recognizes outstanding reporting or programming on network or cable TV, or in doc film, concerned w/ US history, the study of US history, and/or promotion of history as a lifetime habit. Winning program screened & award presented at the annual meeting of Org. of American Historians, Apr. 6-9, 1989 in St. Louis, MO. Films & videos released on or after Jan. 1, 1988 eligible. Submit 1 copy of entry on 1/2" videocassette by Dec. 1 to each of the following award committee members: Dan Carter, Dept. of History, Emory U., Atlanta, GA 30322; Marilyn Mellowes, 190 Lexington Ave., Cambridge, MA 02138 & Robert Brent Toplin, Dept. of History, U. of N. Carolina at Wilmington, Wilmington, NC 28403.

ASTREA FOUNDATION: Funds for women's orgs in PA, NY, NJ, RI, DC, MD, MA, DE & CT. Will consider media projects designed to serve as educ. & organizing tools to promote progressive social change. Grants from $500-5,000. Deadlines: Nov. 30 & May 31. Appls from Astrea Foundation, 666 Broadway, Ste. 610, New York, NY 10012; (212) 529-8021.

STATE & REGIONAL MEDIA ARTS INITIATIVE: Pilot program to increase support for media artists & orgs will offer grants of up to $4,000 to assist state arts agencies in effort to increase support for media arts & travel subsidies for agency staff to attend day-long series of workshops in conjunction w/ NAMAC Annual Conference, to be held March, 1989 in Rochester, NY. Only state arts agencies eligible. Contact: Robin White, 355 E. 86th St., New York, NY 10028; (212) 924-5570.

SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION grant deadlines: artists projects, Jan. 15; established professional arts organizations (by invitation) & developing professional arts organizations, Oct. 15; emerging professional arts organizations, Nov. 15. Contact: SC Arts Comm., 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201; (803) 734-8696.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING: Open Solicitation deadlines: Jan. 6 & Apr. 21, 1989. Contact: Television Program Fund, CPB, 1111 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036.

CORPORATION FOR EDUCATIONAL RADIO & TV (CERT) now forming the Office Exchange, a unique program for media artists & independent producers to have access to office space w/ use of various office equip., incl. typewriter, Macintosh SE Computer & photocopier without charge. Those interested in participating, send name, address, phone, estimate of hours/wk needed & SASE to: CERT, Box 564, New York, NY 10014.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS grants deadlines: Sept. 1 for narrative film development, Nov. 14 for film/video production & Jan. 30, 1989 for AFI/NEA film preservation program. Contact: Media Arts, NEA, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

FULBRIGHT GRANTS for study abroad in film & video, appl. now avail. Deadline: Oct. 31. Contact: Institute of Int'l Education, 809 United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017 or regional offices: 133 Carnegie Way, NW, Atlanta, GA 30303; 401 N. Wabash Ave., Chicago, IL 60611; 700 Broadway, Denver, CO 80203; Ste. 1-A, World Trade Ctr., 1520 Texas Ave., Houston, TX 77002; 312 Sutter St., San Francisco, CA 94108.

MEDIA BUREAU provides funds for presentation of video & audiotapes in NY State, incl. screenings, installations & performances of multi-media works incorporating substantial amounts of video or radio, workshops, short residencies, tech. asst & equip. access relating directly to projects. Appls reviewed continuously. Contact: Media Bureau, The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St., New York, NY 10011; (212) 255-5793.

FILM BUREAU of Film/Video Arts offers grants to NY State exhibition programs sponsored by nonprofit organizations. Matching funds up to $300 available for film rentals & up to $200 per speaking engagement for presentations by filmmakers, producers, directors, technicians & scholars. Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Charles Vassallo, Film Bureau Coordinator, F/VA, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003-4797; (212) 673-9361.

NEW YORK COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES: Call for proposals for Cultural Literacy in a Multi-Cultural Society, to support projects of free events for general audiences. Deadline: Dec. 15, 1988. Contact: NYCH, 198 Broadway, New York, NY 10038; (212) 233-1131.

Trims & Glitches

FILMMAKERS CHARLES BURNETT & JON ELSE are winners of John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation "genius award" fellowships. Congratulations!

KUDOS to Dennis Darmek & Dirk Eitzen, winners of 1988 Regional Fim/Video Grants from Film in the Cities.

KUDOS to Demetria Royals for earning grants & awards from the American Film Institute & Nat'l Endowment Programming in the Arts for *Mama's Pushcart* & from Harvestworks for *Inventing Herself: Images of Black Women.*

CONGRATS to AIVF members who won Midwestern Film & Video Media Arts Fellowships: John Caldwell, Kate Horsfield & Mindy Faber, Laura Kipnis, Nalani McClendon, Ellen Meyers, Prajna Parasher & Deb Ellis, Joel Santaquilani, Michael Moore, James Parker, Steven Bognar, James Duesing, Tom Hayes & Phillip Paternite.

MIDATLANTIC REGION MEDIA ARTS FELLOWSHIPS have been awarded to AIVF members Dan Bailey, Wade Black, Tony Buba, Carmen Coustaut, Stefi Domike, Haile Gerima, David Goodman, Edward Lewis, Elizabeth Mackie, Albert Nigrin, Mark Rance, Jan Roberts-Breslin, Patricia Romeu, Peter Rose, Lise Yasui & Jacob Young. Congratulations!

KUDOS to Southeast Film & Video Fellowship Awardees:

Robert Newton, Nancy Tasecko, David Williams, Julie Dash, George King & Williams Hill.

CONGRATS to winners of Film Arts Foundation Film & Video Grants: Lynn Hershman, Marlon Riggs & Douglas Weihnacht.

LESLIE THORNTON has been awarded a New York City Film/Video Grant from the Jerome Foundation. Congrats!

NEW YORK COUNCIL FOR THE HUMANITIES has awarded production grants to Martha Wallner, Bruce Jackson, Renee Tajima & Christine Choy & Jim Brown & New York Foundation for the Arts. Bravo!

CONGRATULATIONS to Jayce Salloum & Lynne Kirby, recipients of the 1988 Open Channels television production grants from the Long Beach Museum of Art.

AIVF member awardees of Media Arts grants from the National Endowment for the Arts are Ken Feingold, Susan Muñoz & Lourdes Portillo, Christine Choy & Renee Tajima, George King, Donna Matorin, Ross McElwee, Mary Lance, Kavery Dutta, Les Blank, Yvonne Rainer, Daniel Reeves, Eagle Pennel & Southwestern Alternative Media Project, Juanita Anderson & Ayoka Chenzira, Bill Viola, Edin Velez, WGBH Educational Foundation's *New Television* series & Marco Williams. Congratulations!

KUDOS to Albert Nigrin, whose film *Brainwashing* earned prizes at the 1988 Onion City Film Festival & Athens Int'l Film Festival.

CONGRATULATIONS to AIVF member Susan Goldbetter for her 1988 Dance/Film/Video fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts & a video award from BACA's 21st annual film & video fest.

KUDOS to Debora Cohen, awarded a Western States Regional Media Arts Fellowship & a grant from the Pioneer Fund for her video doc on auctioneering, *Going, Going, Going*.

BRONZE MEDAL winners at the Houston Int'l Film Fest include Gene Feldman & Suzette Winter for *Steve McQueen: Man on the Edge*. Congratulations!

H.D. MOTYL tied for 1st place in the 22nd Annual Kenyon Film Fest's experimental category. Congrats!

KUDOS to Lynn Hershman, winner of the 1st prize for video at Marin Video Festival & 3rd prize at the Montrealle Int'l Film & Video by Women fest.

CHANNEL L WORKING GROUP has won the nationwide 1988 Hometown USA Award for Overall Excellence in Institutional Programming. Congratulations!

CONGRATULATIONS to John Caldwell & J. Lalnunsang, whose film *Freak Street to Goa* has earned prizes at the 13th Annual Festival of Illinois Film & Video, 21st Annual Huboldt Film Fest & 23rd Chicago Int'l Film Fest.

UNIVERSITY FILM & VIDEO ASSN has awarded Ann Alter for her thesis film *No Need to Repent*. Congrats!

SLAWOMIR GRUNBERG has been awarded honorable mention in the rehabilitation category at the 1988 American Journal of Nursing Media Festival for his documentary *Is This Life Worth Living?* Congratulations!

KUDOS to Greta Schiller, who has been awarded a Fulbright grant to pursue narrative film production in Great Britain.

HEARTS & HANDS, by Pat Ferrero, has earned prizes at

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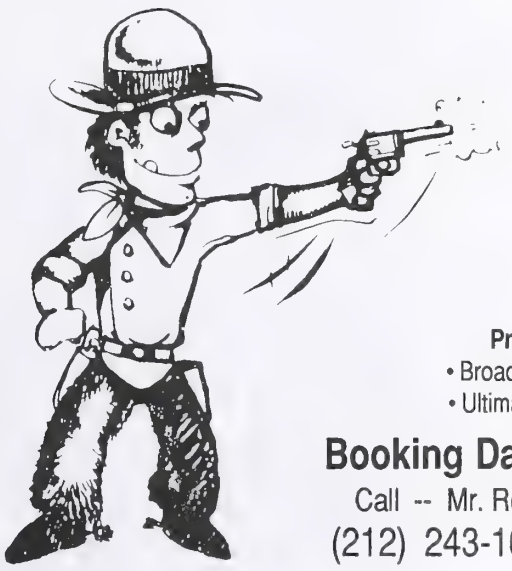
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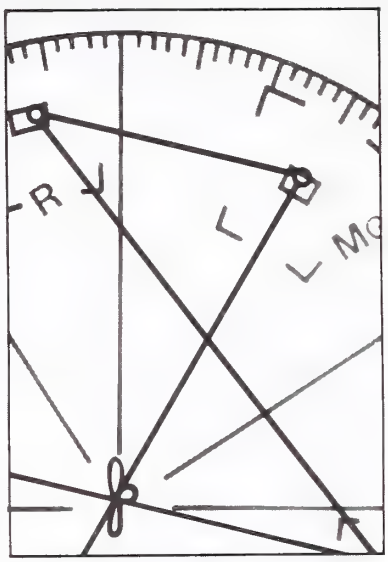
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the Nat'l Educational Film & Video Fest, San Francisco Int'l Film Fest, Athens Int'l Film Fest & American Film & Video Fest. Congrats!

CONGRATS to Helena Kolda, 1 of 8 winners of the Connecticut Arts Commission Film & Video Competition.

RATE INCREASE FOR CLASSIFIED ADS

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October 8th deadline for the December 1988 issue

Beginning with the January/February 1989 issue of *The Independent* , Classified rates will increase to $20 per ad. Take advantage of the old rates while you can. Renew your ad before October 8th—**and save.**

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PROGRAM NOTES

Sol Horwitz and
Patricia Thomson

Short Film Showcase

First, there's a close-up of a blank video display terminal. Then we see the words typed in: "May the fates". The writer backspaces, and tries again. "May the source". And again. "May the f", "May the Force". Cut to a scene from *Star Wars*, when Ben Obi-Wan Kenobi turns to Luke Skywalker and delivers the finished line, one of the film's most popular: "The Force will be with you, always."

Writers, so often the unsung heros of movie-making, are given their due in *Words*, a new short film by Chuck Workman. Created for the 55th anniversary of the Writers Guild of America, the film spans the history of Hollywood. There's Al Jolson in the first talkie, *The Jazz Singer* of 1927, promising, "You ain't heard nothing yet." Mae West sashaying across her hotel suite in *I'm No Angel*, saying, "Beulah, peel me a grape." Elizabeth Taylor hissing at Paul Newman in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, "I'm not living with you. We just occupy the same cage." And there's Meryl Streep in *Kramer vs. Kramer*, breaking the news to Dustin Hoffman that she's about to walk out on their marriage: "Here are my keys. Here's my American Express card, my Bloomingdale's card..."

"Movies have been the literature of my life," says Steven Spielberg at the beginning of *Words*. "In our romance with technology and our excitement at exploring all the possibilities of film and video, I think we've partially lost something we now have to reclaim. It's time to renew our romance with the word." *Words*' fast-paced montage runs through some 200 clips, with many of Hollywood's most enduring lines. There are the ones we know by heart, like Bogart's lament, "Of all the gin joints of all the towns in the world, she walks into mine." And the ones that have become contemporary colloquialisms: "Go ahead, make my day." "I'm gonna make him an offer he can't refuse." "Win one for the Gipper."

Two years ago, Workman won an Academy Award for another homage, *Precious Images*, a compilation of classic scenes from film and television made for the golden anniversary of the Director's Guild of America. Films like *Precious Images* and *Words* are inevitably audience pleasers—they are film trivia games and nostalgia trips rolled into one. Yet no matter how popular, nowadays it takes a special program to get them into movie houses across the country. This program is the Short Film Showcase.

Begun in 1977 as a program of the National Endowment of the Arts and administered by the Foundation for Independent Video and Film, the Short Film Showcase attempts to keep the short film form alive in today's theaters. As its mandate states, "The Short Film Showcase creates a wider audience for short films produced by independent filmmakers and introduces the public to the creative short film innovations that have developed in recent years. We support quality short film programming in commerical movie theaters and encourage new sources of film production by providing technical, marketing, and promotional services for those films sponsored by the Showcase."

Words is the program's most recent release, going into distribution this fall. The Short Film Showcase also distributes *Precious Images*, as well as numerous animations, narratives, and experimental works. The roster also includes *Odalisque*, by Maureen Selwood, *Garden of Earthly Delights*, by Stan Brakhage, *Daybreak Express*, by D.A. Pennebaker, *Java Junkie*, by Tom Schiller, *Confessions of a Stardreamer*, by John Canemaker, and *American Picture Palaces*, by Lee Bobker.

All of these films are offered to theaters for free. In exchange, they are asked simply to keep precise attendance records. These show that, over the course of a given year, Short Film Showcase's films are seen by approximately four-million movie-goers. Many major theater chains take advantage of the program, including such nationwide circuits as Loews and Landmark Theaters. All told, Short Film Showcase's films go to some 7,000 screens.

So, at least in some theaters, film shorts preceding the feature attraction have not yet gone the way of newsreels and cartoons. By offering classic scenes and new visions, the Short Film Showcase helps enrich movie-goers' notions of the history and potential of film—which, for many, is the stuff that dreams are made of.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, an information clearinghouse, and a grant making program. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, foundations and organizations: The New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fund, the Beldon Fund, the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, the Consolidated Edison Company of New York, the Benton Foundation, the Funding Exchange, and the dozens of organizations that advertise in *The Independent*.

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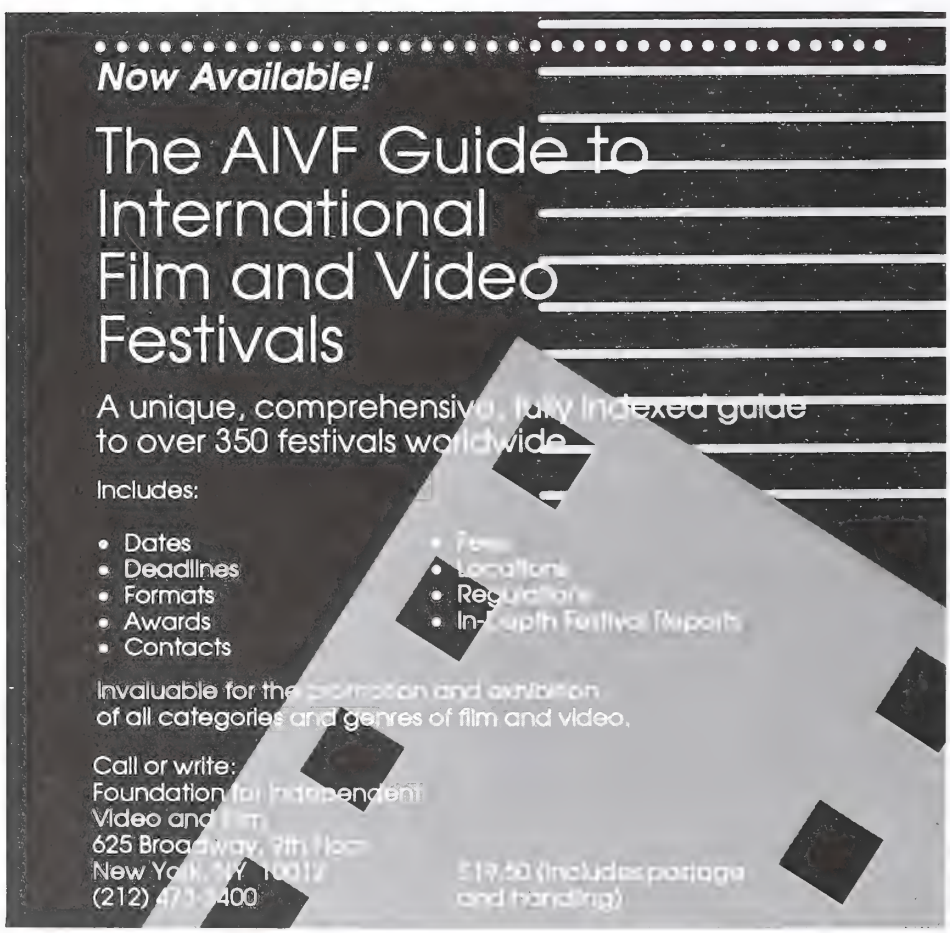
SUMMARY OF THE MINUTES OF THE AIVF/ FIVF BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

At its July 16, 1988 meeting, the AIVF Board of Directors approved a $10 increase in dues for individual members. The Board also approved a system of "regional correspondents" to increase the national contacts of the Association.

The proposal for an increase in dues was presented to the board by the executive director as a practical necessity, given the increasing cost of running the organization and the high cost of AIVF's expanded advocacy role, particularly in the areas of public broadcasting and tax reform. A motion to increase dues from $35 to $45 for individual membership was approved by a vote of eight to two, with Bart Weiss (TX) and Deanna Morse (MI) dissenting. Other rates—organization, library, student, etc.—will increase proportionally. The increase in dues—the first since 1984—will go into effect January 1, 1989.

The board also approved a system of voluntary regional "correspondents" who would promote membership outreach in their region, serve as an advocacy contact, and be a resource person for regional coverage by *The Independent*. The board will start with a small number of representatives (no more than five) on a pilot basis. The correspondents will be selected based upon the existence of regional gaps in board representation following the results of the most recent election. In other actions, the Board approved the work of a special Board Task Force which made numerous recommendations for AIVF to sharpen its image with its members and attract new ones. The recommendations include a new logo for the organization and a greater emphasis on national activities in the organization's literature. The Task Force was authorized to work out priorities and implementation with the AIVF staff. The Board also discussed ways to raise additional funds for advocacy and approved AIVF's and FIVF's budgets for the 1988/89 fiscal year.

A complete set of the minutes is available upon request. AIVF board meetings are open to the public and members are welcome to attend. The next meeting is scheduled for October 15, 1988. Call to confirm date, time, and location. If you wish to participate in any AIVF committees or have an item you would like to have placed on the agenda, call board president Robert Richter, (212) 947-1395.



WELCOME A BOARD

Four new members have been elected to the AIVF board of directors: Skip Blumberg, Dai Sil Kim-Gibson, Lourdes Portillo, and Deborah Shaffer. A New Yorker, Blumberg has produced numerous documentary videotapes, dating back to his tenure with the Videofreex and TVTV. Kim-Gibson, currently an arts and media consultant who lives in Washington, D.C., previously served as director of the New York State Council on the Arts Media Program. Portillo is a San Francisco-based filmmaker, whose producing credits include *Las Madres: The Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo*, which was nominated for an Academy Award. She is also a founder of Cine Acción, a Latino media group in the Bay Area. Shaffer, who lives in New York City, won an Oscar for *Witness to War* and more recently coproduced *Fire from the Mountain*, based on the autobiographical writings of Nicaraguan revolutionary Omar Cabezas.

Two New York filmmakers currently serving on the AIVF board were reelected: Christine Choy and Robert Richter. Choy was a founding member of Third World Newsreel and the executive director of the Film News Now Foundation. She directed the recently released, critically successful documentary film *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* Richter has produced documentary films for 30 years. His most recent productions are *Under the Gun: Democracy in Guatemala* and *Increase and Multiply?* As AIVF president, he has played a leading role as chair of the Advocacy Committee.

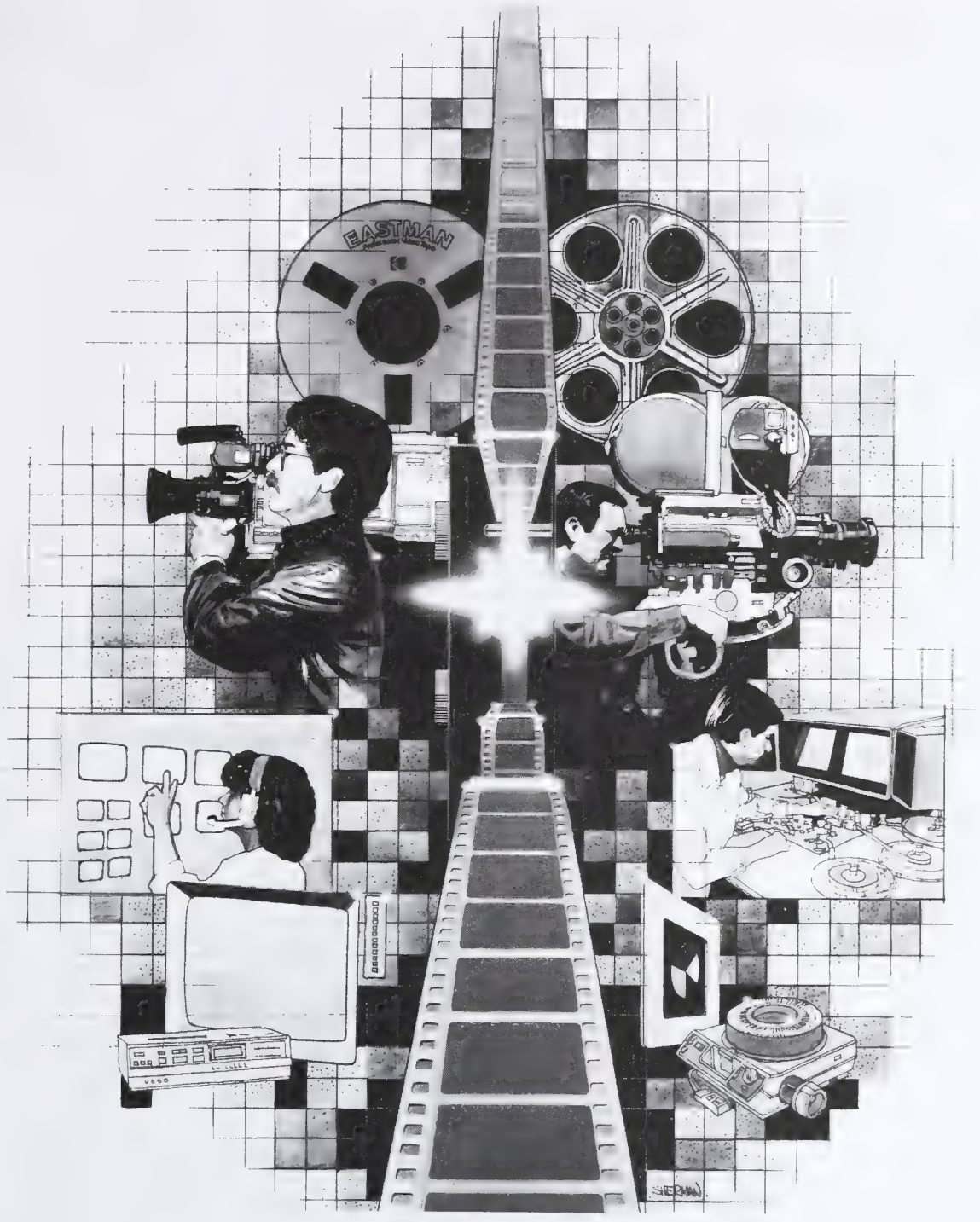
AIVF THANKS

The Emergency Tax Equity Fund, established by AIVF to support efforts to convince Congress to exempt independent film- and videomakers from the uniform capitalization rules of the 1986 Tax Reform Act, has been supported by contributions from: Louis Race.

AIVF thanks all those who have donated to the Fund so far and encourages all other members to send a check or money order, made out to Emergency Tax Equity Fund, to AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012. All donations are deductible as business expenses.

Additional contributions to AIVF's Emergency Legislative Fund, which is being used to advocate a National Independent Program Service for public television, have been received from: Hess Productions, Ruby Lerner, and Ellen Meyers.

AIVF continues to work with the National Coalition of Independent Public Television Producers toward the establishment of N.I.P.S., as well as congressional guarantees for the five public broadcasting minority programming consortia, and welcomes more contributions, addressed to: AIVF Emergency Legislative Fund, c/o AIVF.



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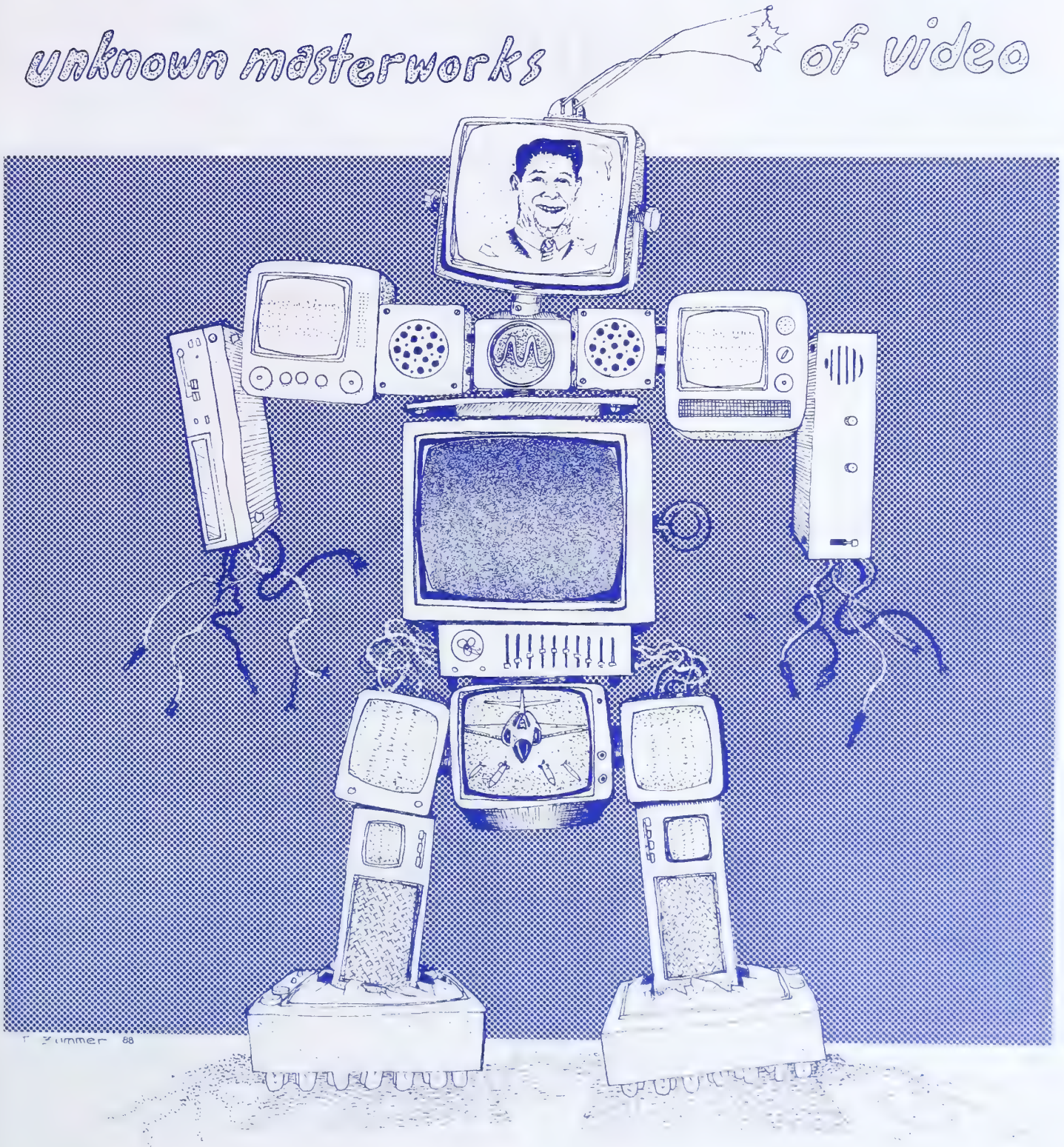
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COVER: Although historians of video art might believe that the oeuvre of well-known artists such as Nam June Paik has been thoroughly documented, analyzed, and catalogued, they should not be too sure. In "Unknown Masterworks of Video," T. Zummer brings to light a number of works not included in any catalogue raisonné. Zummer lives and works in New York City. When not studying philosophy, he makes cartoons.

FILM & VIDEO MONTHLY
THE INDEPENDENT

C-SPAN FOOTAGE ARCHIVED

Although the Cable Satellite Public Affairs Network (C-SPAN) has been in existence for over a decade, it has only been within the past year that the 24-hour network has developed a method for the public to gain access to its old footage. Most recently, C-SPAN signed an agreement with the National Archives and Records Administration in March, which allows 2,000 selected master tapes from the years 1979-83 to be transferred to the archives' Gift Collection in Washington, D.C. The relationship will be ongoing, with subsequent donations occurring each year.

C-SPAN offers live gavel-to-gavel coverage of Congress—the House of Representatives on the original C-SPAN channel since 1979, and the Senate on the newer C-SPAN II, initiated in 1986. During the remaining hours of the day, C-SPAN covers subcommittee hearings, National Press Club addresses, the national party conventions, and other goings-on inside the Capitol Beltway and on the campaign trail. The network receives no federal money, but is a nonprofit cooperative conceived and funded by a consortia of cable operators.

For most of its existence, C-SPAN has had no affiliation with an outside archive, nor does it have facilities that would allow the public to view tapes. In the past, people who wanted to look at footage have had to buy dubs, at $100 per hour, with a one-hour minimum. And, because C-SPAN has no index to its footage, locating material can be difficult and costly, even with the *Congressional Record* at hand. If, for example, someone wants to find John Huston's testimony on the colorization of black and white films and knows what day the four-hour hearing occurred but not the time of Huston's 20 minute testimony, the only option is to buy the entire four hours. Furthermore, C-SPAN licenses its material only for classroom instruction and public display (e.g., conventions, lectures, training tapes). Retransmission by broadcast or satellite is strictly off-limits—which means documentary producers with their sights on public television cannot use C-SPAN footage.

For educators and researchers, there are now two alternatives: the National Archives and Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana. The National Archives is open to all and may be the least expensive way to get dubs. Nevertheless, C-SPAN holds the copyright for 30 years, so users must obtain permission from C-SPAN before the National Archives will permit copies to be made. While the National Archives charges fees of approximately $100 for 10 minutes and $400 for an hour for duplicating 3/4" tape, they allow the public to bring in their own recorders and make copies themselves at no cost. Another plus is that the National Archives will eventually index the collection on Infosen, an audio-visual database cataloging system. Les Waffen of the National Archives' Motion Pictures, Sound, and Video Branch estimates that the indexing will be completed within the next five years.

Purdue's collection, also due to be catalogued in computer files, was established in 1987. The university's collection differs from the National Archives' in two major respects. First, while the National Archives only has selected master tapes, Purdue records C-SPAN's entire programming off-air. This footage has identifying titles for all speakers and the National Archives' original masters do not. Additionally, access to Purdue's collection is limited to students and faculty, and duplicate copies are sold only to them for educational or research purposes.

Producers frustrated with C-SPAN's ban on licensing footage for broadcast should take heart. Bruce Collins, C-SPAN's vice president of corporate development, recently told *The Independent* that, while the official position is still "no transmission, we've been rethinking that. You might say we're now in a transitional stage." C-SPAN has received "many, many, many requests" for footage, Collins confirmed, and their policy is "beginning to cause bad feelings." Producers get particularly desperate when the footage sought from C-SPAN is unique—which is often the case. Collins has turned down many of these requests personally, and recognizes the impact of the policy. "We had a rational answer, but not a humane answer. It did us more harm than good," he admitted. In the meantime, while they are reconsidering their policy, C-SPAN will continue to respond to licensing requests on a case-by-case basis.

PATRICIA THOMSON

SEQUELS

A loan from the British Film Institute will enable the newly formed women's film and video organization **Kino Women International** ["Media Clips," June 1988] to set up and staff an office in London. The BFI has offerred to lend KIWI £2000 per year for the next two years, as well as an office in either the BFI building or at the National Film Theater.

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The new French satellite TDF-1 may not be launched if the government fails to rent the five transponders it carries. This presents a major set-

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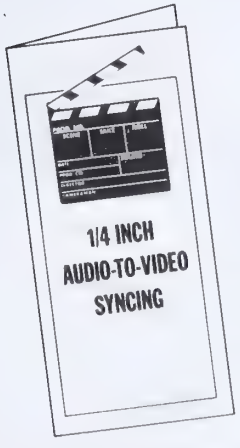
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back for the proposed French cultural TV channel **La Sept**, which was slated to be transmitted via TDF-1 ["Le PAF: The Changing French Audio-Visual Landscape," August/September 1988]. At present, La Sept shares program time with FR-3, a public channel.

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When the **must-carry rules** governing cable's carriage of broadcast channels were knocked down by the Federal Communications Commission earlier this year, broadcasters predicted a bleak future of dropped and repositioned channels ["Sequels," March 1988]. Now there is statistical evident substantiating their fears, compiled by none other than the FCC itself under orders from Congress. The report, released September 1, includes no analysis of its data, but the figures indicate a far greater degree of channel shifting and drops than anticipated. Overall, 31 percent of the television stations reported being dropped or denied carriage, while 34 percent said they had been repositioned. For public television stations specifically, 34 percent indicated being dropped or denied coverage.

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According to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's *Research Note #27*, the national **per capita commitment to public broadcasting** in fiscal year 1987 was $1.00 in the United States, $27.04 in the United Kingdom, $22.37 in Canada, and $14.65 in Japan.

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There's been little significant action in Congress during this season of conventions and campaigns, and, as we prepare to go to press, no progress for the current bills pertaining to public broadcasting ["Sequels," October 1988]. One item of note, however, is a letter received by Ernest Hollings, chair of the Senate Commerce Committee, sent by Secretary of Commerce C. William Verity. Verity warned Hollings that the CPB **authorization bill** raising the corporation's federal funding to $404-million in 1993 invites a presidential veto if the amount of funding is not cut back.

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NYSCA's budget for fiscal year 1988/89 has finally been unfrozen ["Sequels," August/September 1988]. The newly approved level of funding is $51,425,000, which exceeds last year's budget by approximately $2.5-million, but falls about $3-million short of the original 88/89 budget, approved before Governor Cuomo projected a $900-million shortfall in the State's budget.

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TAX ALERT: NEW IRS RULES MANDATE AMENDED 1987 RETURNS

Martha Gever

[Author's note: This article is presented only for the purpose of educating independent film- and videomakers and is not to be taken as financial or legal advice. There are a number of questions touched upon here that remain unanswered. While the IRS may issue additional information about the provisions of the 1986 Tax Reform Act, some interpretations will be clarified only after the courts decide disputes between taxpayers and the IRS. In the meantime, the most reliable source of information and advice concerning the issues raised here is an accountant familiar with film and video production.]

If you're an independent film- or videomaker who did not capitalize all of your business deductions when filing Schedule C of your 1987 income tax return—in other words, almost everyone who reads this article—you should now file an amended return before February 25, 1989 using what the Internal Revenue Service calls the safe harbor method of deducting costs related to the "costs of producing creative property." If you do not, you risk involving yourself in an accounting—and perhaps legal—nightmare in the future.

Safe harbor is IRS lingo for an accounting method designed to allow freelance artists to deduct their business expenses over a three-year period. This method is described in the agency's Notice 88-62, issued last May, which spells out their alternative to the Uniform Capitalization rules—also known as Section 263A—for business deductions for freelance individual artists and writers (and certain narrowly defined corporations and partnerships). Many freelancers had protested that 263A imposes undue burdens, since the rule requires extraordinary bookkeeping measures designed for manufacturers, not the producers of creative productions.

At the time of the announcement of Notice 88-62, Artists for Tax Equity—a coalition of organizations representing a broad spectrum of freelance artists, including the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers—released a statement that argued, "Under the IRS Alternative Plan, as under capitalization, artists must still wait years before taking their full, legitimate deductions." Now, however, since film/videomakers were not included in the recent House and Senate tax bills that will, if passed, exempt freelance artists from Uniform Capitalization rules, safe harbor represents the only possible avenue of relief available to most film/videomakers.

WHAT IS UNIFORM CAPITALIZATION?

Capitalization means assigning expenses to specific productions. *Uniform* Capitalization, under section 263A of the 1986 Tax Act, allows deductions for expenses related to the production of a piece of "creative property" only after that property produces income. E.g., the rent for your office cannot be deducted for 1987 if the project you worked on in it last year did not produce income. Of course, the deductions cannot be greater than the income. The only costs not included in this provision are those for promotion and advertising. Prior to the 1986 tax law, film and video producers were required to capitalize direct costs but not indirect costs, such as overhead expenses.

You still have the option of using the Uniform Capitalization method, which is outlined in section 263A of the Tax Code. However, only independent film/videomakers who realized substantial income and incurred most of their expenses for their profitable projects in 1987 will benefit by choosing this method. If you want to explore the possibility, you should consult a tax accountant, since the accounting required for Uniform Capitalization are complicated.

In considering the pros and cons of a particular tax reporting and accounting method, it's important to bear in mind that film/videomakers were always required to capitalize their direct costs. The cost of film or tape stock, for instance, could only be deducted from income from the project for which that stock was used, and an accounting system called income forecast was mandated to project the income of a given film or videotape. Overhead costs like rent or office supplies, on the other hand, could be deducted from the film/videomaker's overall income.

Under the safe harbor provisions, accounting will certainly be simplified, if only because all business expenses for a year are "aggregated and capitalized." Then 50 percent of that total is deducted in the year those costs are incurred and 25 percent in each of the second and third years. Also, the IRS insists that anyone who chooses to use this method do so for the production of all and any "creative property"—e.g., the book as well as the movie (that is, unless the exemption from 263A for freelance writers and artists becomes law, in which case writing projects will be exempt from all capitalization requirements). And once you have entered the safe harbor, you are not allowed to exit. According to Notice 88-62, "[T]axpayers electing to use this three-year safe harbor may not discontinue such use unless consent to such change in method of accounting is obtained from the Commissioner."

Should you decide to use the safe harbor method, you should expect to pay higher taxes for both 1987 and 1988, since in those years only a percentage of your business costs—50 percent in 1987 and 75 percent in 1988—will be deductible. To reflect this, estimated taxes should also be higher. The IRS protocol for announcing your intention to conform to the safe harbor deduction method is that you type or print legibly at the top of the first page of Schedule C (Form 1040), "Three-Year Safe Harbor Adopted Under the Provisions of Notice 88-62."

Whatever the drawbacks of these new rules, film/videomakers should hasten to file amended 1987 returns and not bide time while Congress debates changes in its 1986 Tax Reform Act. The bills that exempt "creative property" from Uniform Capitalization now pending in Congress explicitly "do not include" films and videotapes. The chance of a defeat of these pieces of proposed legislation and another round that treats film/videomakers more generously, although not absolutely unimaginable, seems unlikely. In any case, such developments could not materialize before the deadline for filing amended 1987 returns has passed.

If a film/videomaker ignores the February 25 deadline, he or she faces the grim prospect of the IRS demanding Uniform Capitalization of all 1987 business costs. And if the 1987 return isn't amended to conform with the safe harbor method, 1988's return will also have to be calculated according to Uniform Capitalization rules. A request to change accounting methods—a legal requirement if you want to shift from one method to another—can only be granted for future years and will not be applied to the current year or the past. Accountant Susan Lee advises, "Do it now. If you wait until January, your accountant could become so backed up filing amended forms that she or he may not have time to deal with your return." So—all of you who were waiting for the solution to your latest tax problems—get out your receipts, your account ledgers, your calculators, and get to work.



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THE TERRITORY: LONE STAR TV



The Bordertown Drive-in of Laredo, Texas, no longer shows movies, but now functions as a flea market. It is part of the changing face of drive-in theaters captured in Jan Krawitz' documentary *Drive-In Blues*, screened as part of *The Territory* on Houston and Austin public television stations.

Photo: Jan Krawitz

Dick Cutler

Independent film- and videomakers seeking audiences for their work may do well by turning to Texas, where *The Territory* has been showcasing work on television for 13 years. In order to understand this successful collaboration between a media arts center, independent film- and videomakers, arts organizations, and local public television stations, it must be placed in the context of local events and institutions. In the mid-sixties Houston's DeMenil family—major art patrons on an international as well as local level, who have supported *Cahiers du Cinema*, the cine-club movement, and numerous artists of international fame—turned their attention towards establishing a film community in Houston that would include film production as well as exhibition. Consequently, the Menil Foundation funded a fledgling media center in 1967. After studying there under Gerald O'Grady, Ed Hugetz became the coordinator of programs in 1969, and Southwest Alternate Media Project (SWAMP) got its start. "Audiences were one or two people in those days, but Mr. DeMenil was determined," recalls Hugetz.

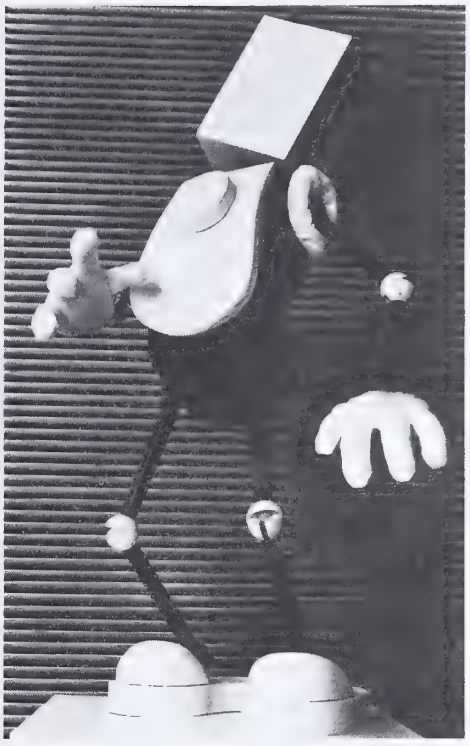
Then, in 1969, filmmaker Bruce Baillie taught briefly at Houston's Rice University and implanted an approach to imagery connected both to a local audience and to the natural features of that locale. Another Houston filmmaker at that time, James Blue, combined Baillie's idea of regional filmmaking with his own cine-club experience to create *The Territory*. Blue subsequently joined O'Grady in Buffalo, New York, where he employed the same concept to create *Frontiers*, another independent showcase on public TV. Meanwhile back in Texas, Hugetz, who became SWAMP's executive director, continued to cultivate *The Territory*, which, he says, is "the oldest ongoing showcase of independent work on TV in the country."

The Territory is part of an expansive concept that encompasses broadcasting, cablecasting, touring, and custom programming of the work of independent media artists with reputations ranging from regional to international. According to Hugetz, *The Territory* was conceived of "as unsettled areas people are moving into, staking a claim, and developing a new life." *The Territory*, a broadcast series of films as well as videotapes, is part of the Southwest Film/Video Tour coordinated by SWAMP's director of exhibition, Marian Luntz. Funding for the tour and *The Territory* comes from a media arts center grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and a Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) grant.

The concept and structure of the Southwest Film/Video Tour may be confusing at first: it allows media programmers in different parts of the state to apply for TCA grants to use SWAMP's NEA-funded program to curate independent media programming designed for their local audiences. Venues for work culled from the tour's list include public television and cable, as well as screenings at art museums and other spaces. Additional funds from foundations, arts councils, and corporations help promote and present the works chosen by local programmers. The funding mix that supports each "stop" on the Southwest Film/Video Tour varies with each location.

For example, the Laguna Gloria Art Museum in Austin collaborated with SWAMP to develop a six-part series of one-hour programs that recently premiered on public TV station KLRU-TV. The works were then aired a second time this fall. Austin's version of *The Territory* was strategically placed in a 10:30 p.m. slot—after Bill Moyers and before *Alive from Off Center* on Monday nights. NEA funding for the series is channelled through SWAMP, but *The Territory*'s executive director in Austin, Judith Sims of the Laguna Gloria Art Museum, obtained a TCA grant to bring the Southwest Film/Video Tour to Austin. Additional funds come from the museum, the Progressive Companies, and in-kind production support from the station. For the four years prior to this fall's public television debut, Sims has been exhibiting the Austin version of *The Territory* on Austin Community Television's public access cable TV channels.

For the Austin series, Sims solicits and considers work in addition to that received for preview by Luntz at SWAMP. Tapes and films selected by Sims meet one or more of the criteria she has established: visual impact, exploration of new or unusual subject matter, and innovative use of technique. Final programming choices are made by Sims in consultation with co-hosts Hugetz and



***Joe Bagadonutz*, a short film by L.A.-based Paul Tassie, who previously lived in Houston, was included in the Austin, Houston, and Corpus Christi broadcast versions of *The Territory*, and toured the state via SWAMP's Southwest Film/Video Tour.**

Courtesy Southwest Alternate Media Project

Tom Schatz, a University of Texas film professor, writer, and media critic. The format of the Austin program is consistent: Hugetz and Schatz introduce each piece and provide commentary after the screening.

Film- and videomakers from the Southwest are usually represented in the Austin edition of *The Territory*. This season's series was kicked off by *Aquamirabilis*, a collaboration between Austin dancer Dee McCandless, designer Gene Menger, and Santa Fe producer/director Suby Bowden. Artists working in Texas wrap up the series with Jan Krawitz' *Styx*, Adam Simon's *Swamp Songs: The Art of Clyde Connell*, Kim Smith's *Heartbeat*, and *They Postponed the War in Order to Carry On the Games*, by Menger. Sim's selections also reach beyond the Southwest, reflecting the national and international tastes of the media art audience she has been cultivating through exhibitions at the museum for the past 14 years. Programs have featured, among other works, *Street of Crocodiles*, by the Quay brothers, Helen De Michiel's *Consider Anything*, Mindy Faber's *Suburban Queen*, Dara Birnbaum's *Damnation of Faust: Will o' the Wisp* and *Charming Landscapes*, Edin Velez' *Meaning of the Interval*, and *Haiti Dreams of Democracy*, the collaboration between Jo Menell of London and Jonathan Demme.

The Territory as broadcast in Houston is very different from its Austin cousin. SWAMP parented *The Territory* series on public station KUHT-TV in Houston 13 years ago. In addition to grants from the Cultural Arts Council of Houston and the Menil Foundation, substantial contributions from Houston's PBS station in the form of facilities, personnel, and artists' fees have grown as *The Territory* has shown to have a viable viewing audience. Programming in Houston has historically had a strong regional leaning, although the emphasis is shifting to become more national and international. Artists whose work has appeared in Houston's *Territory* include Brian Hansen (Austin) with *Speed of Light* and *The Man Who Lost Himself*, Allen and Cynthia Mondell (Dallas) with *Beauty and the Bricks* and *West of Hester Street*. Super 8 filmmakers will be pleased to know that programmers do not disdain small formats and have shown the diaristic works of Willie Varela from El Paso. Louis Alvarez and Andrew Kolker explored Louisiana dialects with *Yeah U Write* and *American Tongues*. New Orleans has been represented by Janet Densmore's *The Algiers Incident* and Karen Snyder's *View from the Stoop*. Other artists whose work has been included are Van McElwee of St. Louis, Victor Masayesva of Arizona, Wheeler Dixon from Lincoln, Nebraska, and Pacho Lane of Santa Fe.

The scheduling slot given *The Territory* in Houston has been excellent. Following the highest rated program on KUHT—*Masterpiece Theatre*—*The Territory* airs at 10 p.m. on Sunday night. The PBS station has made an effort to keep that position open for independent work. Last year the performance series *Alive from Off Center* occupied the slot, and this summer the new documentary series *P.O.V.* played then. From October 2 through November 27, *The Territory* airs this year's series of nine 60-minute shows, although the programs are sometimes allowed to run longer, since this is the last show of the evening. The work shown on the KUHT *Territory* is *never* cut.

Eclectic best describes the kind of work shown by SWAMP on its public TV showcase. Nevertheless, the work collected for each program is organized to provide a coherent presentation. For Hugetz, an important criterion for selection is an "independent eye, something of a personal vision." The Houston programmers also look for tapes and films having a "reflexive quality," i.e., work using rhetorical strategies that include the audience. When pressed to further elucidate, Hugetz proposed the example of a documentary that articulates the stand of the maker—independent eye—as well other points of view—rhetorical strategies—leaving the audience to draw considered conclusions. Luntz, who co-produces and co-hosts the Houston *Territory* with Hugetz, says, "This is a curatorial process. Programmers have different tastes in Houston, Austin, or Corpus Christi."

Impressed by the success Sims had in bringing *The Territory* to Austin audiences, the Art Museum of South Texas in Corpus Christi is coordinating a similar program entitled *Breadth of Vi-*

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***New Music America*, the work of Houston-based videomaker Laurie McDonald, is featured in SWAMP's *The Territory* series aired in Houston.**

Courtesy Southwest Alternate Media Project

sion, which will be introduced on public station KEDT-TV. Producers Lin Nelson-Mayson and Bill Huie, a professor of film at Corpus Christi State University who will also co-host, are relying on SWAMP to provide work to select from. Like Sims, they also received a TCA grant and are working on securing in-kind support from KEDT.

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Although *The Territory* continues to spawn variations, the foundation remains SWAMP's initiative and the core program of its Southwest Film/Video Tour. Films and tapes for this are selected through a variety of mechanisms: applications to SWAMP's Production Fund, information obtained at meetings such as the National Association of Media Arts Centers, and screenings such as those at the American Film Institute's National Video Festival and the United States Film Festival in Park City, Utah.

Acquisition fees paid by *The Territory*, in all its manifestations, are extremely modest. Funds from grants heavily supplemented by the station (which underwrites 80 percent of these fees) enable SWAMP to pay $10 per minute to artists for broadcast on KUHT. In Austin, artists likewise receive $10 per minute for a KLRU broadcast. A fee structure for Corpus Christi's *Breadth of Vision* is unsettled at the time of this writing. Because SWAMP also provides programming services for many of the screening sites on the year-long Southwest Film/Video Tour, work that appears on *The Territory* often receives exposure in a variety of forums, including museums and colleges (approximately 90 percent of the locations), cable stations, and art centers. The artist can net six to eight dollars per minute at each location.

Are risky works shown? Controversial subjects do have a chance on *The Territory*. However, as Hugetz cautions, "We *are* working with PBS stations. While the 'seven deadly words' are a constraint, we also must be sensitive to the pressures on the station from the local audience." Thirteen years ago in Houston *The Territory* was aired at midnight, and a station producer previewed and approved (or disapproved) the work SWAMP had chosen. Today, KUHT never reviews work. Hugetz has carefully built trust with the station by trying not to force them into taking positions unacceptable to its managers. If the series includes controversial work, Hugetz will notify the station and often arranges a live call-in.

Hugetz and KUHT have likewise established a shared concern for developing an audience for unusual television fare: "We are a long way from getting audiences to believe it's possible to have personal expression [on TV]. They see powerful companies taking personal stances, not individuals," Hugetz explains. He cites a socio-political documentary on Nicaragua shot on super 8 as the kind of personal expression that some audience members might mistakenly compare with work created by networks, which assumes an "objective" stance. When irate viewers write or call, Hugetz responds with letters explaining the principles of expression involved. But he remains convinced that perceptive programming accompanied by analysis and discussion is the key to its success in attracting audiences for unconventional independent work. Hugetz also contends that "in Houston, the consistency of the series builds an audience. And newspaper and entertainment editors are more interested in writing about series than one-night showings."

Film/videomakers who wish to have their work considered for *The Territory* or the Southwest Film/Video Tour should write or call: Marian Luntz, Southwest Alternative Media Project, 1519 W. Main, Houston, Texas 77006; (713) 522-8592.

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Dick Cutler is an arts writer and freelance video writer/producer who teaches television and film at Austin Community College and Laguna Gloria Art Museum in Austin, Texas.

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COLOR TIMING LAB LITERACY

David W. Leitner

Editor's note: This article originally appeared in the April 1984 issue of The Independent. *Since the information covered has not changed since that time, we have decided to reprint the piece as a service to AIVF members. We thank the author for his permission to republish and for making minor revisions in the text.*

Pop quiz: What's the meaning of a 25-32-29 timing light?

Need more time? Perplexed filmmakers, read on.

Open the box containing the 16mm or 35mm dailies printed by any major film lab and inside you will discover a list of "timing light" numbers like the one above. What a general ledger is to a sharp-eyed accountant, timing lights are to an experienced filmmaker. Whatever decisions are taken on the set or location regarding exposure indices, foot-candle levels, filter factors, color temperatures, or T-stops, timing lights are the last word on the outcome. Like account totals, they are simple to read, but you have to know how.

As you might recall from previous "In Focus" columns on color negative, a color negative emulsion is a sandwich of three separate silver halide emulsions. One is visible as the orange surface of unexposed negative; it is sensitized to blue light. The layer just underneath the surface is sensitized to green light, and the innermost layer—the one against the inside of the film base—to red. Since white light is a composite of the red, green, and blue portions of the visible spectrum, naturalistic colors are reproduced by superimposing these three emulsions.

Upon developing, a separate silver image is formed in each layer. The silver is then removed in a step called "bleaching." A chemical by-product of this procedure triggers the formation of microscopic dye globules wherever there had been a particle of silver. In the blue-sensitive emulsion, these specks of dye are yellow; in the green, they are magenta; and in the red, cyan. Each of these dyes forms a facsimile of the silver image it replaced.

Each dye layer is, in effect, a record of the level of red, green, or blue exposure on the negative in the camera. More red exposure, for instance, results in a denser silver image in the red-sensitive layer, and after bleaching, a denser cyan dye image. If one could somehow attach a meter to each layer and take a reading, it would be evident which layer, if any, was under- or overexposed and to what extent. No such meter exists, but the readings do. That is precisely what timing lights are.

Two exposures are required to produce a positive image for the screen. The first exposure is set by the filmmaker, who selects a T-stop on the lens. This determines the color and the density of the image on the negative. Since this image placed in a projector does not present a useful image to the screen, there must be a second step, the making of a positive print. For this step a second exposure is required.

While the filmmaker's original exposure can range the broad latitude of color negative, the laboratory's must be exact. Color print stock, like its cousin, color negative, is a sandwich of red-, green-, and blue-sensitive emulsions. In order to satisfy the filmmaker's expectation of accurate color-correction, the laboratory must determine for each shot on the negative a red-green-blue exposure which—when the positive film is exposed on the printer—will compensate any original exposure errors introduced by the filmmaker.

Consider, for example, an improperly exposed close-up of a face: maybe the filmmaker was short a stop in dim light, maybe an 85 filter was neglected in daylight, maybe the lighting was greenish fluorescent.... Whatever the case, the viewer expects a natural skin tone. Since the end result, a natural skin tone of proper brightness, is a fixed constant, the laboratory's exposure must vary according to the filmmaker's. If the filmmaker overexposes and thereby produces a darker negative, it falls upon the laboratory to raise its exposure in order to penetrate the darker negative for an acceptable positive image. If the filmmaker underexposes, the lab must lower its exposure. Whatever the shortcomings of the original negative, the laboratory's exposures, expressed in timing lights, parallel the filmmaker's.

Before we continue: what, exactly, is a timing light? For that matter, what is "timing"? For answers, let's digress and take a journey into the Twilight Zone of the lab printing room, 50 years ago.

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1934. Although 35mm is the "standard gauge" (16mm is amateur technology), standardization in printing machines and techniques doesn't exist. The laboratory we're visiting uses a Bell & Howell Model D continuous contact printer. Like modern contact printers, the negative and the positive raw stock are wrapped in tight contact around a big sprocket that rotates over a rectangular aperture of light. A lamp behind the aperture exposes the positive raw stock through the negative.

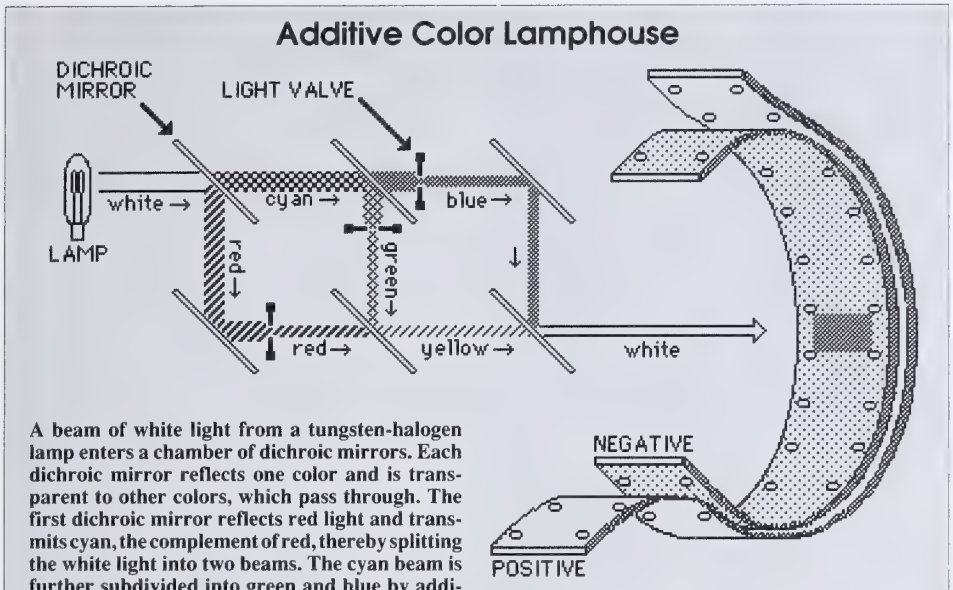
The sprocket turns at a constant rate, and the lamp burns at a constant voltage (its color temperature is not critical, since the lab is printing only black & white —35mm color is 15 years away). By varying the height of the rectangular aperture, and therefore the area that can pass light, changes in exposure are possible. This printer features a big dial with 21 positions for setting aperture size. Six of these "printer points" are equivalent to a stop of light (no matter from which end of the dial, since the scale is logarithmic).

A breathless messenger bearing 1000-foot cans of exposed negative arrives from the studio. The contents go directly into the soup. Upon developing, a "one-light" daily is struck. The printer's mid-scale position, a "number 11 light," is used to print all of the dailies. Since the movie studio cinematographer always works with approximately the same fixed amount of lighting, the exposures are fairly consistent, and everyone's content with this arrangement.

Sometimes, however, a difficult day-for-night shot will require a special printing light. This calls for the Cinex (pronounced "sign-x") Timer. The Cinex Timer is a gadget that makes test-exposures. The operator removes a 21-frame length of developed negative from the shot in question, places it in contact with an equal length of unexposed positive, and in darkness cranks them both through the Cinex. The Cinex prints a checkerboard of sample exposures: even frames are blank, odd frames get a graduated series of timed test-exposure that matches a corresponding series of Bell & Howell printer points. Frames one, three, five, etc. are printed at a 1-light, a 3-light, a 5-light, and so on. The Cinex strip, when developed, appears light on one end and dark on the other. These test exposures, a one-third stop apart, suffice to tell the printing machine operator at which printer position, or "timing light," to print the scene.

The operator of the Cinex Timer, not surprisingly, is known as "the timer." He or she has plenty of "timing" to do. Some cinematographers at the studio want a Cinex strip with each daily. They like to compare the one-light to other possible timings. Then, after a film is edited and the negative is conformed to the editor's final cut, Cinexes are used to adjust timing lights for close matching of adjoining shots prior to costly answer printing.

1988. Standardization through attrition. Not many companies make laboratory printing machines these days, and those that do utilize some version of the Bell & Howell additive color lamp-



A beam of white light from a tungsten-halogen lamp enters a chamber of dichroic mirrors. Each dichroic mirror reflects one color and is transparent to other colors, which pass through. The first dichroic mirror reflects red light and transmits cyan, the complement of red, thereby splitting the white light into two beams. The cyan beam is further subdivided into green and blue by additional dichroic mirrors. In this fashion, white light is separated into beams of red, green, and blue, each of which can be individually controlled by a light valve. A light valve is a pair of tiny "barn doors" that trims each beam in increments ranging from 0 (closed) to 50 (wide open) called "printer points" or "timing lights." Thus measured out, the red, green, and blue beams are recombined at the lamphouse exit and a color-balanced exposure is obtained.

house of 1961. Its scale of 50 printer points—12 points per stop of light—has become the de facto industry standard.

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The Bell & Howell color lamphouse (see illustration) divides the white-light output of a single tungsten halogen bulb into three channels of red, green, and blue light. A single variable aperture at the printing sprocket would fail to regulate these three beams individually, so inside the lamphouse itself are miniature pairs of barn doors that attenuate the light path of each color. In the bat of an eyelash, these "light valves" swing apart or shut down to one of 50 printer point positions. Thus measured out, the red, green, and blue beams are recombined as a single, approximately white-light output at the printer's fixed-size aperture.

Remember that, unlike his/her 1934 counterpart, today's filmmaker shooting color negative exposes not one emulsion, but three. The ability to mix 50 printer points of red, green, and blue light in increments as fine as one-twelfth of a stop provides the laboratory with the necessary range and precision to adjust for each of the filmmaker's three exposures. After all, how many cinematographers trouble themselves with tri-color meters?

The eye can easily discern the finest shot-to-shot mismatches in hue (a source of frustration, which the black-and-white cinematographer, Cinex strip in hand, never encountered). With the myriad complications of mixed light sources, sunlight/skylight rations, lens coloration, filter manufacturing tolerance, and so on, perhaps only an in-camera tri-color meter located behind the lens would prove adequate to the task of color balancing the negative during exposure. Even if such a device were possible, it couldn't register real-world variations in batches of raw stock or laboratory processing. That's why one-light dailies are an anachronism.

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Printing color dailies on the mid-scale red-green-blue light of 25-25-25 demonstrates either a nostalgia for past practice or a penchant for adversity. Given the latitude of color negative, it's not necessary. Considering the effort and expense required to regiment all lighting set-ups to a mere printing light, it's just not practical—especially on a modest budget. Furthermore, for the up-to-date film laboratory with video color analysis and computerized frame-count cueing, it takes just as much time to "time" each scene as it does to spool the length of the camera negative, inspect each exposure, and assign a single average printing light, mid-scale or otherwise.

A timed color daily combines the chief advantages of a Cinex strip and a tri-color meter. Although you don't get an exposure strip with each scene—253 steps (every other printing light, three colors) would require a reel of its own—you do get a chance to evaluate best image quality regardless of how the negative was exposed. This eliminates the guesswork of deciding what's usable, saves the cinematographer potential embarrassment in front of producers and crew, and makes for a balanced workprint.

Anyway, the timing lights, listed scene by scene, tell the full story. They reveal exactly how the red, green, and blue emulsions were exposed. To learn to "read" them is an invaluable critical skill that puts you in touch with a wealth of exposure feedback; however, you must know the following:

1. There is one overall timing light per shot or take. Unlike video, it is not practical to alter color correction within a shot. Each timing light comprises three numbers, always listed in this order: red-green-blue.

2. As noted above, timing lights increase with an increase in original exposure to the negative. More exposure creates a darker negative, and the printer light valves have to open wider to provide adequate illumination to the unexposed print stock. And vice versa. With a decrease in original exposure to the negative, the timing lights fall.

3. Most labs adhere to a 25-25-25 "normal." That is, if one took the perfect meter reading of an 18 percent gray card at the recommended exposure index and exposed perfectly, and the lab's processing were likewise on the mark, a 25-25-25 timing light would reproduce at proper brightness a perfect neutral gray on the screen. Like all ideals, real life doesn't offer many instances of 25-25-25 light. It's a useful touchstone, though, by which to gauge relative under- and overexposure. Note: Since the "25-across" standard is not universal, you should verify your lab's "normal" or "aim" timing light.

4. Six printer points (synonymous with timing lights) equals one camera T-stop. In an absolute sense, an increase of 12 printer points equals a doubling of printer light output, but color negative has an overall gamma (contrast reproduction factor) of .5 and produces only half as much density per stop of exposure. Each time you open your lens one stop, the timing lights will climb only six points. Note: screen contrast is restored by the print, which, with a gamma well over 2.0, inverts and restores the negative's compressed tonal range.

5. The most significant exposure is that of the green layer, which records the band of the spectrum to which our vision is most acute. It represents 60 to 70 percent of the total detail in any image. The blue layer, at the other extreme, is almost inconsequential: it tints the image without adding strong detail. To evaluate overall exposure level, focus on the green timing light and discount the others.

6. Timing lights are meaningful only in so far as the screen image appears pleasing. If your dailies come back from the lab the color of cobalt, the timing lights that are responsible aren't valid. It's also important that your screen matches the A.N.S.I. standard for brightness: 16-18 foot-lamberts with no film in the gate. You can easily measure this with a spot-meter calibrated in foot-lamberts. Otherwise, you and the laboratory (check their screen brightness, too) are not going to see eye to eye on the subject of what appears pleasing.

At this point, you should be able to answer that a 25-32-29 timing light is quite nice, since the green light is a stop heavy, which makes light-craving color negative very happy.

David W. Leitner is an independent producer, whose most recent documentary, "Vienna Is Different": How Austrians See Themselves Today, *explores Austrian attitudes towards the 50th anniversary of the Anschluss. He is a former technical director at Du Art Film and Video Labs in New York City.*

The Law of GENRE & How to Break It

by Ernest Larsen

Film Genre Reader
edited by Barry Keith Grant
Austin: University of Texas Press
425 pp., $32.50 (cloth), $14.95 (paper)

City of Nets: A Portrait of Hollywood in the 1940's
by Otto Friedrich
New York: Perennial Library
495 pp., $24.95 (cloth), $10.95 (paper)

"Here are four pictures. Cross out the one that is different." Note how ill-concealed the violence is in this rigid scenario, found on a smudged sheet of mimeo paper, plucked from the chubby fingers of a dazed first-grader. Frightening, isn't it? And yet, to classify is apparently an absolutely universally necessary act, a primary act in consolidating everyday rationality for six-year-olds. "Cross out the one that doesn't belong." Chills you to the bone, doesn't it? How is it that instructions for a first grader's basic assignment sound more like something drawn from Hitler Youth? What, you are forced to ask, is really being taught in our schools?

Wittgenstein might answer: how to think generically, that's all. What of it? (In German.) Caesar would answer: Divide and conquer. (In Latin.) And before every feature presentation showing on its numberless multiplex screens the AMC theater chain answers (trumpets, actually): "There is a difference." (In the movies.) Which of those three authorities is most convincing? Which the most forthright? Which the smarmiest? Rather than loitering too long over those conundrums, let us instead work out some of the consequences of this well-nigh universal absorption in typicality, of thinking by genre, in a dominant field of visual representation, the field of moving pictures. The cliché (in rhetoric, the genre of genres) has it that the movies are the universal language. Where do such clichés come from? Most likely, and most forcefully, from the pens of those responsible for safe-guarding, elaborating, and otherwise propagandizing for the ever-flowing discourse on movies: the critics and journalists. What I'd like to do here is to examine certain assumptions about the notion of genre in two fairly recent studies, one—*Film Genre Reader*, edited by Barry Grant—a widely used



***The Incredible Shrinking Man* (1957), directed by Jack Arnold**

all stills from *Film Genre Reader*

college anthology, the other—*City of Nets*, by Otto Friedrich—a popular journalistic history of Hollywood in the forties, the decisive moment in film history when genre achieved dominance. My hope is to break through the law of genre in order to dispel, if not deny, the power of generic representation concentrated, for example, in the six year old's mimeo. How can we teach ourselves not to cross out the one that is different but to examine that one even more closely than the others?

First, a brief, probably somewhat unbalanced historical sketch in order to suggest some of the origins of genre study. For a while, in the wake of the publication in 1957 of Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism*, ideas of genre inflected by versions of Frye's narrative typology exerted enormous influence—in some ways a salutary influence, since Frye's deep-grained humanism led him to develop his ideas within a vocabulary that, even though somewhat abstract, was markedly social. The idea of genre became an indispensable tool for any well-equipped literary critic. As a result, however, English majors everywhere sat through interminable lectures in which Frye's categories were further abstracted by epic hunts through *Beowulf* in which roaming myths and free-ranging archetypes were ruthlessly caught, stuffed, and mounted on the spot.

Frye's carefully argued and impassioned ideas about the structure of literature even trickled down to the lowly film critic, who in those days had no academic status whatsoever. Frye's ideas, whatever their merits, thus lent the disenfranchised (or, to be more exact, untenured) film scholar intellectual credibility in an era in which mention of the word Hollywood among "eggheads" (to use the parlance of the time) would be almost certain to provoke utter disdain. It took the influence of the New Wave, with its intellectual adulation of the Hollywood studio product, to eliminate that prejudice in the eggheads' heads. It took the influx of arty, accented movies you had to read. It took, in other words, the imprimatur of French intellectualism, as in fact it still does.

But those days are long gone. Genre theory is perhaps the least popular among the major contenders in the sport nowadays, though to judge from *Film Genre Reader*, Frye's influence is still strong. How is it that the entire notion of genre has acquired certainly not a bad odor but such an incontestably dreary aura so that even the word seems musty? The winds of fashion, which blow so constantly in the film theory world, far from refreshing genre studies have mostly failed to reach them except for outposts such as melodrama or the tearjerker, resorts frequented by French, would-be French, and pseudo-French tourists all taking the same overbooked Lacanian tour bus around Hollywood. This, sad to say, leaves almost no room for the great white (phallic?) hunters, the pudgy balding bwanas stalking the wild Archetype.

And yet perhaps my all too detectable sneer is misplaced. Not that the current practice of genre study is so breath-taking. If *Film Genre Reader* (a thoroughly overhauled version of a 1977 anthology) is an accurate barometer, the most riveting theoretical thunderstorms of the past decade (the postmodern hurricane?) have passed it by to inundate other territory. In the sense of its continual meteorological influence on the reception of films, genre really does seem like the weather. As a commonplace it evokes the commonplace. No one can talk about films without using the vocabulary of genre, but that vocabulary doesn't seem to be growing very much.

In an era that champions difference, the notion of genre stifles because it doesn't seem to offer anything but sameness. Consider the definition of genre this volume offers: "genre movies are those commercial feature films which, through repetition and variation, tell familiar stories with familiar characters in familiar situations." Thomas Sobchack in his article "Genre Film: A Classical Experience" also speaks of "the genre film's unrelenting pursuit of imitation." It is perhaps not coincidental that genre theory took off in the fifties, when the entire country was so obsessed with the pursuit of sameness that even Hollywood noticed and made films like *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit* (1956). In our supposedly more sophisticated era, people mock the commodification of the generic by wearing T-shirts that prompt "Generic T-Shirt," which falls within the genre of self-advertisement of commodification.

Genre films themselves were the creation of the studio system of the thirties and forties, when Hollywood reached its peak of productivity. It is therefore not surprising that it's the folly of the pursuit of successful sameness which animates most of the absurd or absurdly horrifying anecdotes in Otto Friedrich's relentlessly anecdotal "portrait of Hollywood in the 1940's," a portrait of Hollywood as a model factory town. I mean model in the sense that it is portrayed not as less brutal than any other factory town in the U.S.—just more colorfully brutal. Friedrich's book could well be summed up as a study of the culturally paralyzing but thoroughly remunerative effects of the collective pursuit of sameness. The insatiable industrial



Above: *Forty-Second Street* (1933), directed by Lloyd Bacon.

Below: *Little Big Man* (1970), directed by Arthur Penn.



capitalist desire for a mass-produced commodity which reliably induces a virtual delirium of mass consumption finds its fulfillment in the Hollywood film industry's production not just of innumerable and virtually indistinguishable genre films but in its production of audiences that paid for the predictable joys of experiencing the already known. Friedrich's account of the industry marshals strictly anecdotal evidence for this, a procedure which can be as numbing as a sledge hammer—but also as forceful. Friedrich rarely, if ever, draws any theoretical conclusions from his stories. He claims to have ingested no less than 500 books about Hollywood, a diet so lacking in intellectual protein that it's perhaps not so surprising that his book is stringently lacking in explicitly stated ideas about its subject. He does offer mountains of evidence, both circumstantial and from the testimony of eyewitnesses, to substantiate how venal and culturally benighted the Hollywood moguls were, but it wouldn't take much of a cynic to ask what else is new?

Does all this mean, then, that when Hollywood's industrial function as Dream Factory #1 is superimposed onto the notion of genre you get the standardized production of standardized dreams? Quite obviously, that was (and is) the ideal—but reality often evades the best-laid plans. Since people often shirk their responsibility to be automatons, the ideal remains Platonic, but who would dare argue that Hollywood doesn't do the trick well enough? At any rate the production of standardized audiences appears to be a programmatic constituent of the notion of genre. Should, therefore, critical studies like *Film Genre Reader* be concerned with examining the technologies by which audiences are successfully and unsuccessfully standardized? The articles contained in the book are unanimously concerned with how the films work, not with how the audiences work. The audience, the one unknown in this equation of known variables, is left sitting in the dark, except for almost stray references such as this one in Thomas Schatz's "The Structural Influence": "[A]udience familiarity with the Hollywood generic product, and thus the audience's active but indirect participation in that product's creation...provides the basis for whatever claims might be made for the genre film as a form of cultural ritual and for its status as contemporary myth." Here aesthetic considerations—myth, ritual, status—rapidly consume the spectator.

The 24 authors work with all their skill and intelligence, and the result is valuable. But this piece of work issuing from the academic factory and



Double Indemnity (1944), directed by Billy Wilder.

targeted at fairly standardized and often preselected audiences working in that same factory (they're called students) fulfills its function without exceeding it, which is another definition for a generic item. The tool and die of academic book publishing spits out one more well-polished product. It is in this way, at least, another contribution to the industrial production of standardized fantasy—the imagination not of what could be different, but by definition the reimagination of the same. It certainly has value as a contribution to the sociology of inertia, but it is precisely the inert that stands in our way taking up all the space—or appearing to.

Constructively, what can be done about it? The notion of genre is mired in Hollywood's relatively brief history in the sense that it lacks predictive power. Genre critics tend to examine and reexamine the same few texts, that is, the interesting texts, leaving aside the thousands of cultural artifacts which are supposedly not interesting but are, if anything, much more profoundly generic than the privileged texts. Since genre study is so mired in this selectively considered past, it is condemned therefore to be reactive. A predictive capacity is, of course, an essential component of any theory which doesn't wish to condemn itself to the status of publicity. Even so, why hasn't genre theory told us much about anti-genre films? Certainly, anti-genre narrative films have told us enormous amounts about the intellectual and psychic costs of living by genre, living, in other words, within the law.

Shouldn't analysis of the conventional expose what the conventions deliberately preclude or exclude from view? Shouldn't a representative genre theory locate the historical loss of genres foreclosed by Hollywood's carefully tailored choices of which genres are most exploitable, which genres it picks to enforce the law of standardization? One such study, for example, might focus on the first five or so years of the talkies, before the self-censorship imposed by the Hays Office. Many of these films, which are rarely shown, exhibit a gestural, behavioral, verbal freedom still startling today. Related to this neglected inquiry is one peculiar assumption of genre studies in general: the assumption of the universal, even if not necessarily conscious, consent of the audience, which in this sense could be typified as the governed, those who know how to sit quietly in their seats. Shouldn't an accurate assessment of convention seek out those who refuse to be disciplined? Those who talk like mad, those who walk out, those potential audiences which refuse to be convened?

One place to begin such an inquiry is with the primary audience—consumer, subject—of genre fiction: the child. Any four-year-old in our culture is already a walking, talking encyclopedia of the already-known. How, for example, does the legitimation and ratification of unlimited corporate rapacity on Saturday morning television affect the non-generic imagination of the child? In what sense, if any, do the so-called archetypal categories and qualities of the generic cook the raw imagination of the average kid? This is not, of course, to contest the unavoidable necessity for kids to learn the codes of mass culture as a survival mechanism but to contest the closure of the semantic universe such that so much of everyday experience arrives not only precoded but prestandardized. Does it have any particular significance that several generations of kids have torn open the cereal box not to eat but to get at the trademark prize inside?

Shouldn't there be a great deal to learn from the omnipresence of generic narrative in children's lives? If so, what we learn might tend to confirm the suspicion that genre is essentially a disciplinary mode of representation. In his discussion of literary genre, *Signs Taken for Wonder*, Franco Moretti quotes the early Lukacs:

> Form in a work is that which organizes into a closed whole the life given to it as subject matter, that which determines its times, rhythms and fluctuations, its densities and fluidities, its hardnesses and softnesses; that which accentuates those sensations perceived as important and distances the less important things; that which allocates things to the foreground or the background, and arranges them in order.... Every form is an evaluation of life, a judgement on life, and it draws this strength and power from the fact that in its deepest foundations form is always an ideology.... The world view is the formal postulate of every form.

One conclusion that might be drawn from Lukacs is that consistent adherence to genre, which by definition is the formal replication of form, practically amounts to a self-condemnation on the part of its practitioners. It is of interest that Hollywood appears always able to recuperate this ideological petrification. While not an exemplar of mixed form or anti-genre or collapsing genre, except at the trivializing level of self-parody, Hollywood keeps finding other explicitly marked alternatives to the expired or moribund genres of the western, the musical, the gangster film. Films like *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?* or *Die Hard* reinvigorate defoliated genres by mating them with each other. The harvest of this agronomic technique of hybridization is already enormous, of course. Cross a cartoon with a film noir and shake as fast as possible. The resulting sugar rush proves that the



T-Men (1948), directed by Anthony Mann.

effect is powerfully caloric. Hollywood's exploitation of genre proves to be itself exploitable with only a slight shift in terms that is so clearly marked that no audience can fail to engage the slightly skewed code.

Is an alternative imaginable that is not purely a negation? Please note, first of all, that a pure negation is unacceptable. Why? Partly because a pure negation sacrifices the possiblity of an audience—the trajectory followed by the so-called underground cinema. But more important, because it would deny the usefulness and necessity of convention. Convention is where we all meet, like it or not. The codes of generic narrative, while so often so oppressively restricted in Hollywood's hands, offer shared pleasures. The social pleasures involved in participating in the creation and elaboration of narrative codes keeps us going to the multiplex week after week. What should be at stake, then, in creating an alternative to this creation is how to transform those customary social pleasures, not how to deny them. Narrative codes structure the representation of experience. That is, they structure the representation of how life changes or fails to change. Shouldn't the representation of mutability itself be marked by shifts, criss-crosses, hesitations, disjunctions, mistakes, leaps, mixed signals, wrinkles, potentials, collisions, contradictions, other unnamed or unnamable possibilities? It is, after all, such representations of excess (going beyond the genre) that we love in Hollywood film. In other words, we tend to be most pleased when Hollywood breaks its own law of genre and leaps into delirium, as in *Gun Crazy*, *The Naked Kiss*, *Kiss Me Deadly*, *Tarnished Angels*, *The Big Carnival*, etc. If consistent adherence to the law of genre purges difference (the allure of the other), consistent adherence to the law of anti-genre would eliminate sameness (the allure of the conventional). Why get stuck at the puerile level of the either/or choice? Inconsistency is the obvious way to an out-of-court settlement.

The West German filmmaker-theorist-lawyer Alexander Kluge has been spending much of the past 30 years attempting to forge such an alternative. What does he have to say about the perilous enterprise?

> Above all else, film is not a normal capitalist merchandise since it always requires a form of artistic production; even if it was a mass produced product, it would be produced artistically since it is a merchandise of fantasy and it is the reception that thus constitutes the film.... A materialist aesthetic means a way of organizing collective social experience. This collective social experience exists with films or without them. It has existed for about three-hundred-thousand years, and been 'actualized' for only about three hundred of them, because social development grew faster. The invention of film, of the cinema, is only an industrial answer to the film which has its basis in people's minds. The stream of associations which is the basis of thinking and feeling... has all the qualities of cinema.... The real mass media is the people themselves, not the derivatives like cinema or television. And if you have a conception of film which means that it's the spectators who produce their films, and not the authors who produce the screenplay for the spectators, then you have a materialistic theory.... The concept of production not only includes the manufacturing of the film but also its exhibition and appropriation by the imagination of the spectator who actually produces the film, as the film on the screen sets in motion the film in the mind of the spectator.*

If Kluge's conception is correct, then an alternative may lie not in setting oneself against the conventions of genre but in preparing the headiest possible stew of genre and anti-genre, fiction and nonfiction. As an entity, the seamless genre tends to foreclose not the possibility of contradiction but instead tends to propose that such contradictions are reconcilable by divorcing them from their basis in concrete social existence. If an anti-mythic perspective like Kluge's finds that much of contemporary existence presents itself as generic, it does not formalize this knowledge by enveloping it within another container. The developing strength of the spectator's imagination, which unfortunately has been somewhat stunted by the non-nutritional institutional blandness of its generic diet, will in this view resist automatic recoding. Kluge's films, which are resolutely recombinant in a genetic sense, test this hypothesis. The film his films often create in the mind of this spectator is, as you might expect, somewhat disorienting. If you are used to prepackaged, standardized guided tours, you will probably miss a few turns here and there. But this momentary bracing experience of being lost is the precise inverse of the meaning of the word in such conventional expressions as: "Esther just lost her husband." In Kluge's films the issue is not a convenient euphemism for death but a difficult sensual intellectual rebirth.

© Ernest Larsen 1988

Ernest Larsen is the author of a genre novel, Not a Through Street, *published by Grove Press.*

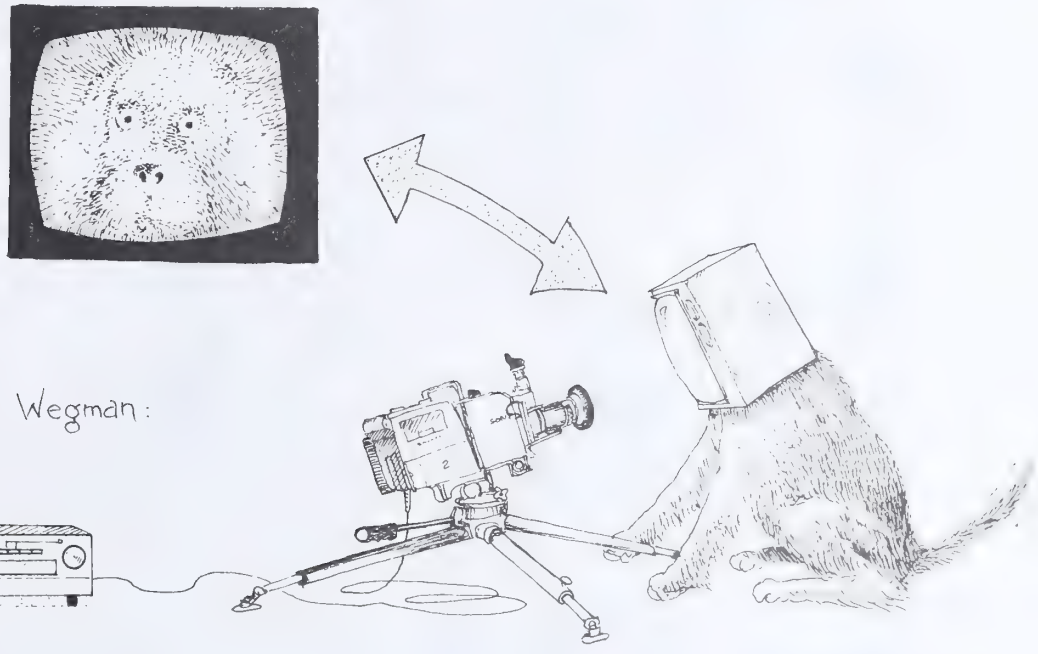
* Jan Dawson, *Alexander Kluge and The Occasional Work of a Female Slave*, New York: New York Zoetrope, 1977.

Unknown Masterworks of Video

T. Zummer

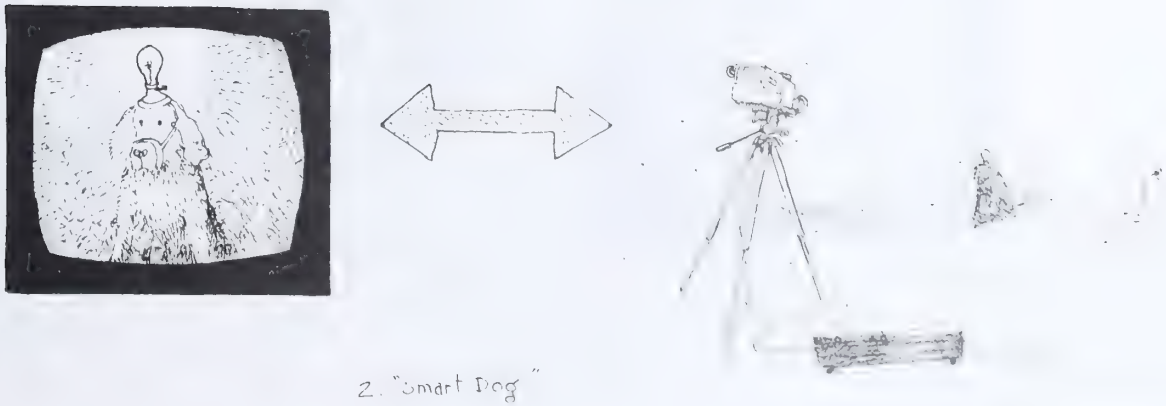


"Medium Burn"
Ant Farm



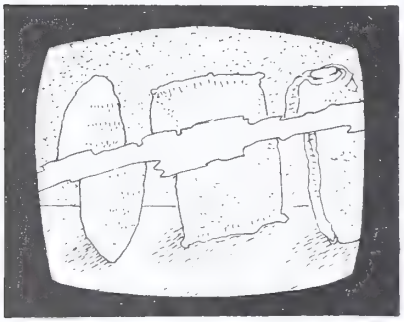
Two By William Wegman:

1. "His Master's Voice"



2. "Smart Dog"

Unknown Masterworks of Video



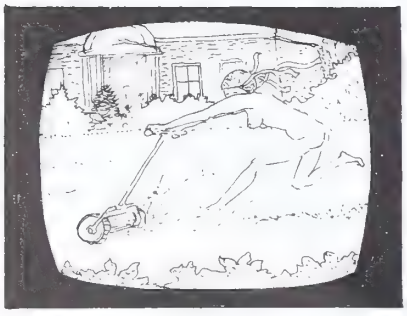
Joan Jonas:

"Vertical Rolls, Danishes and Knishes"



Bill Viola:

"I do not know
what it is I have done"



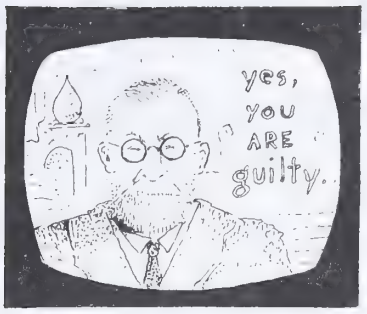
Leslie Thornton:

"There Was an Obscene Clod
Mowing"



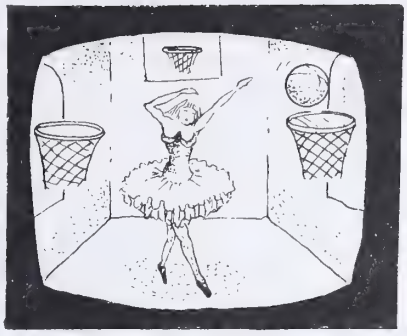
Steve Fagin:

"Virtuoso Play:
The Double-Deluxe
Spanner-in-the-Works"



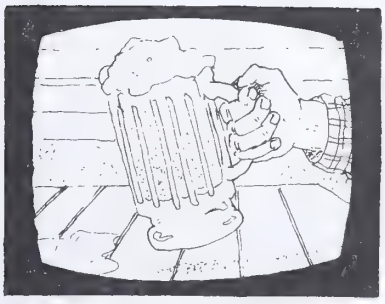
Annie Goldson,
Chris Bratten

"Supplemental
Nightmares"



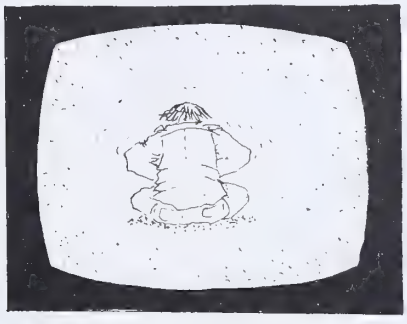
Eleanor Antin

"From the Archives
of Modern Sports"



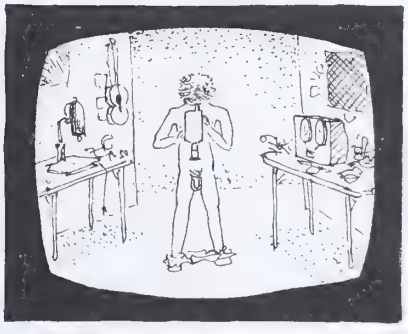
Sherry Milner, Ernest Larsen

"Room for a Brew"



Vito Acconci

"The Red Herring Tapes"



Alan Sondheim

"The Phenomenology of
the Life-World vs.
The Null-Set"



Paper Rhinoceros TV

"This Production cost
our two-cents"

CARIBBEAN CONNECTIONS: THE 1988 IMAGES CARAIBES FESTIVAL



***Playing Away*, the humorous feature by West Indian director Horace Ove, was one of the most popular films in the feature competition at the new Images Caraibes festival in Martinique.**

Courtesy the Museum of Modern Art

Louis Kilkenny

Aficionados of Caribbean tourism will know the French Antilles island of Martinique as the newest of the resort isles while history buffs may remember it as the birthplace of Josephine, the wife of Napolean. But Martinique—Department of France—is also the birthplace of Aimé Cesaire, the co-founder of negritude, and Franz Fanon, the noted black revolutionary psychiatrist who brought us *The Wretched of the Earth*, required reading in the turbulent sixties. Now the island is also the site of the first festival of Caribbean cinema, Images Caraibes, held from June 17 to 24.

For the most part, Caribbean cinema has been viewed almost exclusively as Cuban cinema. The Images Caraibes festival refuted this impression by showcasing films and videotapes from the various regions of the Caribbean and in languages ranging from Haitian Creole to Curaçao Papiamento. These films were either entered in the competitions for feature and short films or were shown within a broad retrospective of Caribbean cinema. In addition, over 30 hours of videotape were programmed at Martinique's Cultural Center. Finally, to ensure continued attention by festival participants, there was a four-day symposium on the particular problems faced by Caribbean filmmakers working either in the region or in Europe or North America.

Perhaps the most ambitious of the feature films in competition, from a production point of view, was *Haitian Corner*, directed by Raoul Peck. Filmed in New York City on a small budget, the film transports Haiti's political upheaval to the Haitian immigrant community in Brooklyn when a political activist seeks out his former torturer who also lives in New York in economic and political exile. Peck reminds us that oppression and dictatorship are, in the end, carried out by ordinary people against each other. With only two professional actors in the cast, this film deservedly won the festival's Grand Prize.

Other films presented in feature competition included Dominican A. Gilberto Melendez' *Una Pasaje de Ida*, a profoundly disturbing and very well-crafted film that tells a tragic story of stowaways on a ship bound for Florida. Audiences were also treated to *Almacita de Desolato*, by Felix de Rooy of Curaçao, which presents the beautifully filmed (by Ernest Dickerson) legend of Almacita, a high priestess who did not remain a virgin and thus was cast out into the desert. Both Melendez and de Rooy studied filmmaking at New York University, as did Puerto Rican Diego de la Texera, who directed *Tesoro*, a tale of three young people on a dramatic treasure hunt on the fictional island of La Mona, which was also screened in the feature competition section of the festival.

From Venezuela, Trinidadian-born Michael New brought *Cubaqua*, the story of a mining engineer fascinated with Venezuela's colonization. Cuba's entry was Fernando Perez' first feature, *Clandestinos*, which depicts the struggle of an urban revolutionary group in pre-Castro Cuba. From Martinique came *Vagabond Gran Chimin*, by New York-based Patrick Valey. Filmed during the island's annual Carnival celebrations, this film looks at Martinican life as experienced by a street urchin.

Like *Haitian Corner*, the three remaining features selected for competition at Images Caraibes focused on Caribbean people living in Europe and North America. Martinican Willy Rameau's *Le Lien de Parante* and Guadeloupean Christian Lara's *Black* were both made in France. The

former film recounts the story of a French man who discovers that his long-lost grandson is not only English but Black. The latter depicts the travels of a Black theater group whose actors are from Africa, the U.S., Europe, and the Caribbean. Another story set far from the Caribbean was also one of the most popular films at the festival. *Playing Away*, by Trinidadian Horace Ove, the most successful Black filmmaker now working in England, features a West Indian cricket team from South London that journeys to a small English country village to play a local team in a charity match. With many of Britain's well-known Black actors in its cast, the film explores racism—subtle and overt—as well as the immigrant realities of life in Britain.

The prize for the best short film was given to the documentary *Kid Chocolate*, a charming personal film by Gerardo Chijona about Cuba's most famous boxer, who died in early August of this year. Two other films of note in this category were *So It Go*, a searing indictment of police brutality and media complicity by Jamaican Chris Browne, and *Dreaming Rivers*, by the Sankofa Collective of Great Britain. Directed by Martina Attille with impressive cinematography by Nina Kellgren, *Dreaming Rivers* features an inspired performance by Corinne Skinner-Carter in the role of a dying St. Lucian woman reminiscing about her bittersweet years in England. Skinner-Carter previously appeared in the 1950s Hollywood feature *Fire Down Below*, filmed in her native Trinidad and Tobago, and has also made numerous stage and television appearances in Britain, where she now lives.

As part of the retrospective, the festival offered films by jury members Humberto Solas, Sara Maldoror, and Menelik Shabazz—*Lucia*, *Aimé Cesaire*, and *Burning an Illusion*—as well as *Festival of Black Arts*, by honored guest William Greaves. This kind of programming continues and extends the tradition of screenings previously organized by Images Caraibes, which have included examples of Francophone African and U.S. Black cinema.

Festival director Suzy Landau, who also teaches history in Martinique, and the Images Caraibes staff have much to be proud of. Most of the Caribbean's best artists can only find fame and financial security away from home. The festival sought to celebrate their success closer to home. The presence of so many Caribbean filmmakers and films in one place was as much a revelation to the filmmakers as it was to the Martinican people who flocked to Fort-de-France's two major cinemas for almost every show. It is hoped that this biennial event will be an inspiration to Caribbean filmmakers and a means of resuscitation for film production in and about the region by its own sons and daughters.

Louis Kilkenny, a Guyanese independent filmmaker living in New York City, is interested in working on films with Caribbean themes.



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CHEAPER THAN CHEAP: THE HAMBURG NO-BUDGET SHORT FILM FESTIVAL



***The General*, by the West German group Schmelz Dahin (Melt Away), has become a super 8 cult classic. It was in the line-up at Hamburg's No-Budget Short Film Festival.**

Courtesy filmmakers

Karen Rosenberg

The West German city of Hamburg already has a low-budget film festival, which is a big-ticket item compared to its No-Budget Short Film Festival. Proudly and pugnaciously, the No-Budget catalogue lists the cost of almost every film and video. Not a few were in the 50-Deutschmark range—about $30.

West Germany now has an active super 8 scene, although I wouldn't call it a movement, since there's no common style or theoretical program, just a collection of dedicated individuals, generally in their late twenties. There is even a critic at the Berlin-based leftish newspaper *Die Tageszeitung* named Torsten Alisch, who concentrates on super 8, and he was one of the judges at Hamburg this year. Occasional grants from one of the West German states fund not only production but distribution of films around the country. And the Goethe Institute, which gets government funds to promote German culture, has taken a few super 8 artists and their works abroad. They're presently considering circulating a package of the prize-winners from Hamburg's past No-Budget festivals.

Those in the West German experimental film and video world still feel relatively unappreciated and underfunded, but many working in the U.S. would envy their plight. Maybe we should learn more about their funding and distribution opportunities in order to emulate them. Next year may be a good time, since the No-Budget festival would like to put together a U.S. program in 1989 and invite some filmmakers to attend. This year, special programs of films from Great Britain and East Germany and West German super 8 from the 1960s supplemented the main competition.

The chief problem with the No-Budget event is the need for more—or better—preselection. There just weren't enough good films and videos to merit a three-day program, held May 20-22. A side competition among films on an announced theme, "The Hole," was disappointing, and I hope next year's topic, which will probably be "Fish," yields a better catch.

A fascinating and annoying thing about the avant-garde—as with any cultural phenomenon—is that most of its works are simply dreadful, but its best are breath-taking. I was impressed by the third-prize winner at Hamburg, a 12-minute film by 25-year-old Maija-Lene Rettig, a member of the Alte Kinder distribution network. Her *Rosenrot* (*Rose Red*), obviously influenced by Maya Deren, is an associative montage about a woman's sexuality. In its most erotic sequence, a female hand descends deep into the layers of a rose. The first-prize winner, *Swing*, was also a real find. The eight-minute black and white film by Joachim Bode reminded me of a Beckett work: Why is a chubby adult, dressed as a child, standing on a beach, trying to move a swing that won't swing? The film resists interpretation and so becomes reminiscent of dreaming.

If there is anything that united the most acclaimed films at Hamburg, it was an anti-intellectual streak which values emotions and regards coherent ideas as suspect. *The General*, a virtual super 8 cult classic by a Bonn group called Schmelz Dahin (Melt Away), is intentionally vague in its theme, so that viewers will be open to experiencing the pictures on the screen. I've heard U.S. academics describe a neo-Romanticism in contemporary West Germany, and this cinematic anti-rationalism may be one of its manifestations. But, of course, the avant-garde has been making evocative films for years, so it may be inaccurate to see this as something new. Much experimental cinema has never strayed far from Romanticism's fascination with night thoughts and the faint remembrance of things past.

For more information on the Hamburg No-Budget Festival, contact its director, Markus Schaefer, at Ditmar-Koel-Strasse 23, D-2000 Hamburg 11, W. Germany.

Karen Rosenberg is a writer whose work has appeared in Sight and Sound, *the* Nation, *the* Boston Globe, *and elsewhere.*

IN BRIEF

The "In Brief" listings are compiled by Kathryn Bowser, director of **FIVF's Festival Bureau.** Listings do not constitute an endorsement & since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

AFI FEST-LOS ANGELES, March, CA. Presented by American Film Institute, this noncompetitive, invitational fest shows int'l selection of films at Cineplex Odeon Century Plaza Cinemas in LA. Last yr's featured sections on Latin American cinema, Swedish cinema & TV & several world & nat'l premieres. About 90 films from 42 countries shown. Fest works in collaboration w/ Anthropos Festival to increase documentary film screenings. Several US independent feature, short & doc films showcased. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on 3/4". No entry fees. Fest pays return shipping for selected films; other shipping costs at expense of producer. Fest also features seminars, w/ last yr's dedicated to screenwriting. Deadline: Dec. 1. Contact Ken Wlaschin, AFI-Fest, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027; (213) 856-7707.

INTERNATIONAL COMPUTER ANIMATION COMPETITION, April, PA. Established in 1985, competition "recognizes excellence in the field of computer animation" & judges work on technical quality & creativity. Cats: broadcast computer graphics, corporate logos, TV commercials, corporate communication, music video, research, science & industry, theatrical motion picture graphics. Nonprofessional cats incl. secondary/undergraduate & graduate/faculty. Entries should be produced on digital computers, completed in 2 yrs prior to competition & under 5 min. Awards incl. 1st, 2nd & 3rd place honors, with a Best of Show special award; prizes consist of trophies & screenings at awards reception & dinner. Entry fees: $50 professional; $25 nonprofessional. Formats: 3/4", VHS, Beta. 35mm slides of selected frames must be submitted for publicity purposes. Deadline: Dec. 1. Contact David Collins, National Computer Graphics Assoc., 2722 Merilee Dr., Suite 200, Fairfax, VA 22031; (703) 698-9600.

MIAMI INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, February, FL. "For the Love of Film" is slogan for fest, a noncompetitive showcase for about 30 recent int'l films now in 6th yr. Features, docs, shorts, experimental & animated works considered. Films should not be in theatrical release in US & completed in last 4 yrs. Several films have premiered at fest. Directors or producers invited as fest guests. Fest has consultant for US ind. work. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm; preview on 3/4". Deadline: Dec. 1. Contact Nat Chediak, director, Miami Film Festival, Rivergate Plaza Bldg, 444 Brickell Ave., Suite 229, Miami, FL 33131; (305) 377-3456; telex 264047 SPEN UR.

NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 17-21, CA. Attended by large numbers of distributors & producers, fest is one of world's oldest & largest com-

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Re:Vision Film Festival, Mar.1-12, MA. Review of fest appeared in the Aug./Sept. issue of *The Independent*. Address written inquiries only to Mark McElhatten, co-director, Re:Vision Film Festival, 60 Adams St., Apt. 2, Somerville, MA 02145.

San Francisco International Film Festival/Golden Gate Awards Competition, Mar. 8-19, CA. 1989 marks the 32nd yr for fest, held in several venues in SF & Berkeley. Program last yr attracted audiences of over 42,000 to a program of more than 80 films from 32 countries, many of which were US premieres, w/ large number of works from Asia, Latin America, Eastern Europe & USSR. Golden Gate Awards competitive sidebar, established in 1960, recognizes nontheatrical film, video & TV productions from several countries. Entries are accepted in 4 divisions: recent shorts, docs & animation (film & video) on various topics (e.g. artist profiles, arts, history, current events, comic or dramatic fiction) produced between Jan. '87 & Dec. '88; broadcast television, for current int'l commercial, noncommercial & cable TV programs originally telecast between Jan. 1-June 30, '89; Bay Area Filmmakers, devoted to work directed &/or produced by Bay Area residents between Jan. 1 & Dec. 31, '88 & New Visions, which accepts experimental, abstract & personal work on "the cutting edge of cinematic achievement" produced between Jan. 1- Dec. 31, '88. Awards in each cat incl. Best of Category (trophy & $250 honorarium), Special Jury trophy &/or Honorable Mention certificates. Entry fees in various divisions range from $25-160, based on running time. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Dec. 1. Contact Competition Coordinator, Golden Gate Awards, San Francisco International Film Festival, 1560 Fillmore St., San Francisco, CA 94115; (415) 567-4641; telex 6502816427 MCI UW; fax: (415) 567-0432.

Santa Barbara International Film Festival, Mar. 3-12, CA. This is 4th yr for growing int'l fest, which expanded from 4 days to 10 to accommodate demand of audience of 15,000. Nearly 50 films screened. Feature, doc & short works incl. in program, some of which are premieres. Workshops & tributes round out event. $1000 cash award in student competition. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on 1/2". Deadline: Dec. 1. Contact Phyllis De Picciotto, Santa Barbara International Film Festival, 1216 State St., Suite 201, Santa Barbara, CA 93101; (805) 963-0023.

Santa Fe Film Exposition, March, NM. Screens recent independent films of all styles, lengths, subject matter & genres over 4 consecutive weekends. Nationally televised works not eligible. Rental fee paid. Format: 16mm; preview on cassette. Entry fee: $10, covers shipping & handling. Deadline: Nov. 28. Contact Linda Klosky, Film Expo, Center for Contemporary Arts, Box 148, Santa Fe, NM 87504; (505) 982-1338. Mailing address for UPS shipments: 291 E. Barcelona Rd., Santa Fe, NM 87501.

UNITED STATES FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 20-29, UT. As major nat'l showcase for new ind. US films, Sundance Institute-sponsored fest, held in ski resort of Park City, hosts program of premieres, workshops, seminars, special events & tributes. Its independent film competition features premiere of several new doc & feature films. Entries in competition (specified as dramatic or doc) must be at least 51% US financed, completed after Nov. 1, 1987, not broadcast & not scheduled to open theatrically before Jan. 13, 1989 in more than 3 N. American markets, not played in more than 1 domestic fest & not produced, financed, or initiated by major studio. Dramatic films must be at least 70 min., docs at least 55 min. Selection committees choose films for each competition. Dramatic committee will incl. Tony Safford of the US Film Festival, Lawrence Smith from the Utah Film Commission, Marjorie Skouras of Skouras Pictures & John Pierson of Pierson & Associates. Doc committee incl. Tony Safford, Mitchell Block, Direct Cinema, Larry Kardish, MoMA Film Dept. & Robert Hawk, Film Arts Foundation. 3 awards incl. Grand Prize of $5000 (jury ballot), Audience Award (popular ballot) & Filmmakers Trophy (filmmakers ballot). 1 rep for each film invited to attend as fest's guest. Format: 35mm, 16mm; preview on 3/4" or 1/2". Entry fee: $30. Deadline: Nov. 4. Contact Tony Safford, program director, United States Film Festival, Sundance Institute, Producers Bldg. 7, Rm. 10, 4000 Warner Blvd., Burbank, CA 91522; (818) 954-4776.

FOREIGN

Berlin International Film Festival, Feb. 10-21, W. Germany. As 1 of premiere fests on int'l circuit, Berlin offers ind. filmmakers hospitable atmosphere at both fest & market. Thousands of film industry professionals from every continent, along w/ enthusiastic local audience, attend. Films programmed in 6 sections. The International Competition screens 70mm & 35mm feature-length films, as well as 35mm shorts under 15 min. Entries must have been produced 12 mo. prior to fest, not participated in other int'l competitions or fests & be German premieres. If accepted, German subtitles necessary. Selections for this section made by fest director Moritz de Hadeln. Awards: Golden Berlin Bear to best feature; Silver Berlin Bear special jury prize & Silver Bears for best director, actress, actor & outstanding single achievement. Golden Berlin Bear for best short & special prize (Silver Bear) for best screenplay

or director also awarded. Noncompetitive Panorama Section, which under programmer Manfred Salzgeber usually included several US ind. films, accepts features & docs of any length in 70mm, 35mm, & 16mm (incl. work originating in video). Noncompetitive Int'l Forum of Young Cinema, programmed by Ulrich Gregor, devoted to 35mm & 16mm progressive & avant garde cinema & in particular seeks long, difficult works (entries must be over 60 min.). Other sections: Kinderfilmfest, for 35mm & 16mm films over 59 min. produced for children; New German Films & Retrospective. The European Film Market provides bustling meeting place for screenings & sales. In past few yrs, an American Independents market booth, cosponsored by AIVF & New York Foundation for the Arts along w/ consortium of 30 ind. media organizations, has been center of activity for US ind. filmmakers, coordinating screenings, introductions, distributing catalog & poster on participating fest & market films & several other functions. Along w/ fest films, several ind. features represented solely in market by booth. For info, contact Lynda Hansen, NYFA, 5 Beekman St., New York, NY 10038; (212) 233-3900. Fest deadline: Dec. 1. Contact Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin, Budapesterstrasse 50, D-1000 Berlin 30, W. Germany; tel: (030) 254890; telex: 185255 fest d; fax: 254 89111.

GOTEBORG FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 27-Feb. 5, Sweden. Now in 11th yr as a leading int'l fest in Scandinavia, it is officially supported by Swedish Film Institute & recognized by FIAPF. 1 section only, screening 80 features & docs & 80 shorts. Programmers select films seen at other int'l fests or sent for preview on cassette (VHS PAL). Work must be Swedish premiere. Covered by most major Scandinavian press, radio & TV. Distributors attending in increasing numbers (films presented here generally receive commercial distribution pickup). Prints are occasionally shared w/ Rotterdam, Berlin & Reykjavik. Audiences last yr numbered 50,000. Fest pays shipping costs 1-way & films are returned 1 week after fest. Depending upon budget considerations, fest brings guest directors from US. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Dec. 3. Contact Agneta Green, Goteborg Film Festival, Box 7079, S-402 32 Goteborg, Sweden; tel: 31 410546; telex: 28674 FIFEST S.

HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Mar. 23-Apr. 7, Hong Kong. Nearly 150 films screened yearly in large noncompetitive FIAPF-accredited fest, presented by Hong Kong Urban Council & now in 13th yr. Program consists of int'l cinema section (40-50 new films w/ 1 retro of 12-15 films); Asian cinema sections (20-25 films w/ 1 retro of 12-15 films); new Hong Kong cinema section & Hong Kong cinema retro. Features, shorts, docs & animated films accepted. Guests invited w/ varying degrees of hospitality. Estimated attendance over 120,000. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; preview on cassette. No entry fee. Prints returned 2 wks after fest to airport of destination only. Deadline: Dec. 1. Contact Festivals Office, Hong Kong Coliseum Annex Bldg, Parking Deck Fl., KCR Kowloon Station, 8 Cheong Wan Rd., Kowloon, Hong Kong; tel: 3-642217; telex: 36484 USCH HX.

MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF FILMS & VIDEOS ON ART, Mar. 7-12, Canada. 7th annual competitive fest works to promote production & exhibition of films & videos on art in fields of painting, sculpture, architecture, design, crafts, museology, cinema (personalities & techniques), photography, literature, dance & music. 5 sections: Creative Crossroads presents films & videos of the last 2 yrs in & out of competition; Focus, showcasing theme (style, period, or trend), tribute (to artist or filmmaker) & event (anniversary or exhibition); Reflections (films/videos produced by artists); Artificial Paradise (film/video design, incl. set design, costumes, special effects, cinematography, editing, music); Time Remembered (retrospective of films/videos on art). Awards voted on by int'l jury incl. Grand Prix, Best Director, Best Film for Television, Best Biography, Best Essay & Aid to Creative Achievement (film); Grand Prix (video). Work should be sent airmail only, fest pays return shipping. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on cassette (final selection based on original format). No entry fee. Deadline: Dec. 1. Contact René Rozon, director, Festival International du Film sur l'Art, 445, rue Saint-Francois-Xavier, Suite 26, Montreal H2Y 2T1; (514) 845-5233.

STUTTGART INTERNATIONAL ANIMATED FILM FESTIVAL. February, W. Germany. 5th annual competitive fest designed as forum on latest animated films. Program incl. int'l competition, panorama, retros, int'l school program, workshops & exhibitions. Films must be under 35 min. & produced after Dec. 31, 1985. Prizes range from DM1,000-DM10,000, w/ accompanying certificates. Filmmakers whose works are chosen invited as fest guests. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preselection on cassette. Industrial/advertising films not accepted. Deadline: Dec. 1. Contact Internationales Trickfilm Stuttgart, Forststrasse 2, 7000 Stuttgart 1, W. Germany; tel: 0711 228339.

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Nineteenth-century Black American slaves and twentieth-century racism are the subject of *Civil Rights*, a video installation by Mary McFerran and Betsey Newman.

Courtesy artists

Renee Tajima

AIVF member Zach Richter recently completed an hour-long documentary, **Beyond the Dream: Immigrants in America**, as part of the *Promise of America* series produced by the United States Catholic Conference. Offering a counterpoint to the romanticization of the immigrant experience, Richter looks at the historic plight of immigrants, focusing on some of the largest groups, including Irish, German, and Italian Catholics. Following the popular celebration of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, now more than ever the history of immigration has been stereotyped as the fabled "huddled masses" moving to a new country where all are welcome. *Beyond the Dream* examines the discrimination in housing and employment faced by immigrants one hundred years ago and links this history to social issues facing immigrants today. *Beyond the Dream:* Corporation for Educational Radio and Television, 211 W. 56th St., Ste. 3F, New York, NY 10019; (212) 582-8078.

Civil Rights is a new video installation that pays homage to Black American slaves. Created by Mary McFerran and Betsy Newman, with design by Nick Dunn, the installation consists of two videotape loops, a tunnel, a wooden coffin, and quotes from slave journals and current newspaper clippings of stories of racism in America. The tape by Betsy Newman plays on large monitors housed at the rear wall of the tunnel. In it, the image of a Black slave running through the woods is intercut with a dramatic representation of the nineteenth-century Abolitionist Angelina Grimké. McFerran's tape is housed in the wooden coffin with a small monitor. It comprises still photos of slaves, film clips by D.W. Griffith, and other racist portrayals of Blacks in the nineteenth century. The audio track includes songs by Paul Robeson and other Black musicians. The cramped space of the tunnel simulates those used by slaves escaping from the South before the Civil War. *Civil Rights:* Betsy Newman and Mary McFerran; 175 Ludlow St., #10, New York, NY 10002; (212) 505-1521; 677-4434.

Is it possible that a "shadow government," populated by racketeers, arms merchants, drug smugglers, assassins, foreign agents, and military men—motivated by personal profit and ideological zeal—has manipulated public funds and policies toward their own ends? The Empowerment Project explores these allegations in a new, 76-minute documentary, **Coverup: Behind the Iran Contra Affair**. Narrated by actress Elizabeth Montgomery, the film synthesizes the volumes of documents from the congressional committee hearings with interviews, testimony, and new information. Among the insiders interviewed are former CIA operative John Stockwell, jailed arms supplier Edwin Wilson, Reagan analyst Barbara Honegger, and two Texas Congressmen. The Empowerment Project production team, Barbara Trent, Gary Meyer, and David Kasper, are based in Santa Monica, California. *Coverup:* Empowerment Project, 653 18th St., Ste. 3, Santa Monica, CA 90404; (213) 828-8807.

During the 1930s and '50s, the lights and music of San Francisco's Forbidden City Nightclub captured the imagination of an international and elite clientele. Like the Cotton Club of Harlem, which featured some of America's finest Black performers, Forbidden City emerged as a showcase of Chinese American entertainers in all-American productions. Filmmaker Arthur Dong has received seed money from the Pioneer Film Fund, the Zellerbach Family Fund, and private donors to produce an hour-long documentary, **Forbidden City, USA**, which profiles these Chinese Americans who broke through cultural barriers and discrimination in the entertainment industry to achieve a brief moment of fame. Dong will present this history, which includes the "Chinese Bing Crosby" and the "Chinese Sophie Tucker and Sally Rand," through interviews and archival material. He is currently raising the remaining $200,000-plus needed to complete and distribute the film. *Forbidden City, USA:* Deep-Focus Productions, 1737 N. Orange Grove Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90046; (213) 874-5146.

The daily experiences of young people for whom English is a second language are portrayed in the one-hour documentary **Becoming Bilingual,** currently in postproduction. In part one, producer Lauren Goodsmith focuses on a young Puerto Rican girl's first year in New York City, where she attends a bilingual elementary school in East Harlem. Part two traces the experiences of a teenage boy from mainland China, who is a new arrival in an ethnically-diverse high school in Queens. At the school, students from 75 different countries speak 45 languages. The documentary

will compare the two major approaches to bilingual education—the "transitional" and the "maintenance" models—and examine the legal bases, equal rights issues, and human impact of bilingual education. *Becoming Bilingual:* Key Light Productions, 245 W. 107th St., New York, NY 10025; (212) 678-4674.

In New Mexico, videomaker Pacho Lane has completed two new tapes on the Soviet Union and Afghanistan that cover the Afghan war from the perspective of the Soviet and Afghan governments. **The Black Tulip** weighs the costs of the Soviet presence in Afghanistan in the words of Soviet soldiers and civilians. The tape shows footage of Soviet units in Afghanistan, from a firebase to a reconnaissance regiment, as well as a visit to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier by two mothers whose sons were killed in Afghanistan. **Inside Afghanistan** examines the ideological background of the internal conflicts in the country, a National Police convoy, schools in Kabul, a "hearts and minds" visit by government troops to a village, Pakistani refugees, and Mujahedin groups who changed sides to support the government, as well as Mujahedin prisoners. The film ends with an appeal by the noncommunist governor of Kandahar for Afghans to resolve their differences. *The Black Tulip* aired on television in England, Belgium, Switzerland, and the Soviet Union, and is available in PAL and NTSC versions. *The Black Tulip* and *Inside Afghanistan:* Pacho Lane, Box 40477, Albuquerque, NM 87196; (505) 262-0166.

Principal photography for **Decline and Fall**, a video adaptation of a short story by Charles Bukowski, was completed during Memorial Day weekend at the Club Car in San Francisco. Director/coproducer Starr Sutherland adapted the script with B. Blair for this story of the brief encounter between two men—Carl (Rinde Eckert), the bartender in a low life, seedy bar, and Mel (Robert Ernst), his last customer of the evening. What begins as a typically banal tale plunges into a look at the darker, seamier side of life. The 12-minute short is coproduced by Kathy Brew and shot by Tom Finerty using Beta SP. *Decline and Fall* is the second in a proposed series of three short narratives, all based on stories by Bukowski. The first, *Bring Me Your Love*, was completed in December 1986. *Decline and Fall:* Kathy Brew, (415) 922-9338, or Starr Sutherland, (415) 861-8666.

Another Bay Area production that just completed principal photography is **The Crowd Pleaser**, a low budget feature by producer/director Jim Ferguson. This 90-minute comedy revolves around three ambitious news people working together to cover Pope John Paul II's 1987 visit to the San Francisco Bay Area. The central character, Mark Jetson, is an off-beat news reporter who is always looking for attention and a laugh, who takes little seriously, including the Pope. As he prepares for the Papal visit, his former girlfriend, a news editor, appears on the scene with her new boyfriend, a hard-driving network



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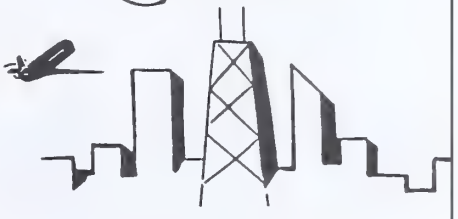
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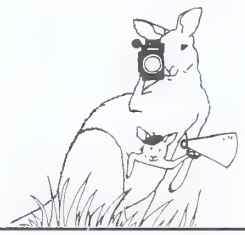
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Actors and crew from the San Quentin prison production of Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*: (left to right) Spoon Jackson; Del Thompson, stage manager; J.B. Wells; Danny Leffel, director; Jan Jonson; Twin James; Happy Wilson. This production will figure in one section of the multi-part *Beckett Project*, produced and directed by John Reilly.

Photo: Beppe Aridsson

producer. These two join ranks with the laid-back Jetson to produce a documentary on the Pope—producing multiple upheavals in Jetson's personal and professional life. Ferguson shot over 20 hours of documentary footage during the Pope's visit, which will be woven into the fictional story. *The Crowd Pleaser*, which has already attracted interest from three distributors, is currently in postproduction. *The Crowd Pleaser:* Barbara Tomash, (415) 821-9551.

AIVF member Thomas T. Taylor III has produced a 12-part cable access series entitled **The Age Wise Series**, which won the Community Video Award of the National Media Owl Awards. The twice monthly magazine-style program, which is cablecast throughout the Portland, Oregon area, focuses on the senior community there. As producer, Taylor worked on location and in the studio with a pool of 40 senior volunteers, all of whom were recruited and trained by the Center for Urban Education at local public access facilities. Using a peer approach, the group produced programs on a variety of topics, from sports and social activities to educational and economic assistance. The project received funding from the Fred Meyer Charitable Trust, with sponsorship from Rogers Cable TV. *The Age Wise Series:* National Media Owl Awards, Rosner & Liss Public Relations, 650 N. Dearborn, Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 664-6100.

A Singing Stream: A Black Family Chronicle, produced by Tom Davenport and the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill Curriculum in Folklore Department, will be aired nationally on PBS later this year. The film profiles North Carolina folk traditions through the gospel music of the Landis family of Creedmoor, North Carolina, several of whom sing with the Golden Echoes Gospel Quartet. The gospel-singing family was chosen by Davenport and coproducer Daniel Patterson because they are practitioners of North Carolina traditional art rooted in family, community, and church. *A Singing Stream* has already garnered numerous kudos, including the first prize at the University California at Los Angeles Film/Folklore Festival, the Bronze Hugo at the Chicago International Film Festival, second place at the National Black Programming Consortium's Prized Pieces competition, and first place documentary in the independent productions category of the 1988 local public television program competition held by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. *A Singing Stream:* Diana Cooper, University of North Carolina, Center for Public TV, Box 3508, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-3508; (919) 962-8191.

Shari Robertson, an AIVF member from New York, spent four months in refugee camps on the Thai-Cambodian border to produce a one-hour documentary. **Waiting for Cambodia** is the story of the more than 250,000 Cambodians living in temporary camps—overcrowded bamboo cities that house victims of genocide, war, and famine. Robertson, who directed the documentary, and producer David Feingold examine the political stalemate that keeps the camps filled with refugees who are afraid to return home as well as their efforts to preserve a disappearing heritage under constant threat of Vietnamese artillery. Robertson and Feingold are the only filmmakers who have been allowed to visit Site 8, a Khmer Rouge camp, where they conduct a tense interview with a communist leader, while weaponfire is heard in the distance. *Waiting for Cambodia* aired on the Public Broadcasting Service in September as a presentation of WHYY-Philadelphia. *Waiting for Cambodia:* Art Ellis, WHYY, 150 N. 6th St., Philadelphia, PA 19106; (215) 351-1262.

Nature Is Leaving Us, a video opera installation by Chicago multimedia artist Miroslaw Rogala, was presented to over 40,000 viewers at the 1988 Chicago International Art Exposition last spring. The video sculpture includes a 17-minute, three-channel video and four-channel sound installation with synchronized, continuous playback and slide projections. The original music for the piece was composed by Rogala, with prerecorded vocals and improvisations by Urszula Dudziak. *Nature Is Leaving Us* is concerned with the processes of nature in contrast or direct opposition to the methods and consequences of technological progress. Each part of the installation

portrays a different aspect of contemporary life: birth and arrival, life and movement, leaving, absence, and death. A national and European tour of the piece will be launched this fall, at such sites as the Pacific Northwest Art Exposition in Seattle and the 1989 Video Sculpture Retrospective sponsored by Kolnischer Kunstverein in West Germany, Holland, and Switzerland. *Nature Is Leaving Us:* Joel Botfeld, 1524 S. Peoria, Chicago, IL 60608; (312) 743-8735.

Greta Schiller and Andrea Weiss have just released a new film, **Tiny and Ruby: Hell Divin' Women**, a portrait of the legendary Black lesbian jazz trumpeter Tiny Davis and her lover and musical collaborator, drummer Ruby Renei Lucas. *Tiny and Ruby* is a companion piece to the filmmakers' 1986 documentary *International Sweethearts of Rhythm: America's Hottest All-Girl Band,* which profiled the all-female, interracial swing band of the 1940s and features Davis, one of the band's star attractions. When the International Sweethearts disbanded at the end of World War II, Tiny, who was known as the female Louis Armstrong of the period, continued her collaboration with Lucas—which lasted over 40 years—and formed her own six-piece combo, Tiny Davis and the Hell Divers. *Tiny and Ruby* was coproduced with Channel 4 Television/London and received support from the Crossroads Fund, Media Alliance, Sophia Fund, Astraea Foundation, and Brooklyn Arts and Culture Association. It premiered in June at the San Francisco International Gay and Lesbian Film Festival where it was designated Best Documentary. *Tiny and Ruby:* Jezebel Productions, Box 1348, New York, NY 10011; (212) 691-8838.

Still Frame, a 28-minute video by Doris Chase, is the first completed project of the sixth cycle of the American Film Institute's Directing Workshop for Women. A continuation of Chase's *By Herself* series of videos on mature women, this story unfolds to reveal a woman's life during a studio photo session. It stars Priscilla Pointer as a photographer and Robert Symonds as a writer and her lover. Written by Kimberly Von Brandenstein with original music by Denise Gentillini, *Still Frame* is the fourth in the *By Herself* series and will be broadcast on European television next year. *Still Frame:* Doris Chase Productions, 222 W. 23rd St., Ste. 722, New York, NY 10011; (212) 243-3700.

The Global Village video production center recently received a $250,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Arts Programming in the Arts to support **The Beckett Project**, a multipart exploration of the life and art of writer Samuel Beckett. The documentary, produced and directed by John Reilly, will be the first extensive treatment of the Nobel Laureate playwright and novelist for an U.S. audience and will broadcast on public television as a three-part miniseries. The programs will include *Waiting for Beckett,* a feature documentary that examines the artist's life and works; a program on Beckett's plays with roles for women; and a section that will combine

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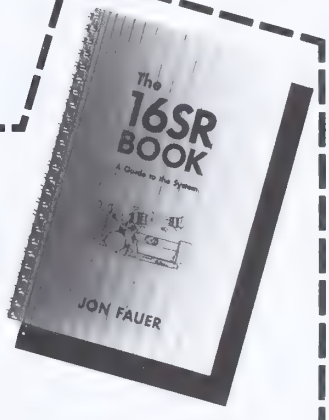
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These chorus girls were among the many Chinese American performers who achieved a brief moment of fame at San Francisco's Forbidden City Nightclub, the subject of an upcoming film, *Forbidden City USA*, by Arthur Dong.

Courtesy filmmaker

John Landis of the gospel singing Landis family, who perform under the name of the Golden Echoes, is featured in *A Singing Stream: A Black Family Chronicle*, by Tom Davenport.

Courtesy filmmaker

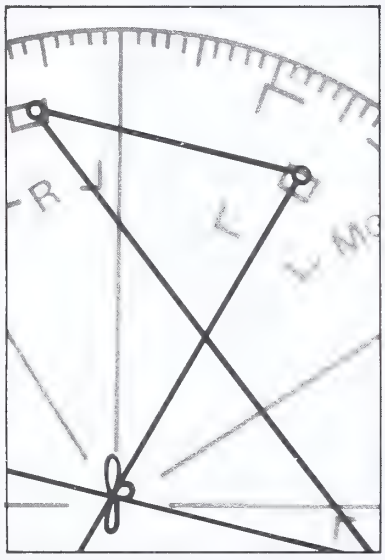
two works that the author later adapted for television: *Krapp's Last Tape* and *What Where*. Reilly has already shot footage of the preparation and performance of *Waiting for Godot* by an all-inmate cast at San Quentin Prison. *The Beckett Project* has also received support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, California Council for the Humanities, and the Maryland Council for the Humanities. *The Beckett Project:* Dawn Vander Vloed or Jodi Hauptman, Global Village, 454 Broome St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 966-7526; 334-8232.

Intermedia Arts Minnesota has just picked up Debra Wallwork's new tape **Warriors** for distribution. The hour-long documentary on Native American Vietnam veterans was produced for Prairie Public Television last year and features interviews and footage from the 1985 Vietnam Veteran's Intertribal Association Pow-Wow in Sisseton, South Dakota. Native Americans have served in the U.S. Armed Forces since World War I, and during the Vietnam War over 86,000 served, most of them voluntarily. Through the words and memories of the vets themselves, *Warriors* explores the tribal support system and the contradictory feelings of pride and guilt experiences by many involved in that controversial war. *Warriors:* Intermedia Arts, 425 Ontario St., SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414; (612) 627-4444.

New York City-based mediamakers Jem Cohen and Adam Cohen have premiered **Witness Butthole Surfers**, their film/video work-in-progress, at the Hallwalls Gallery in Buffalo, New York, in a show curated by artist Robert Longo. According to the makers, *Witness Butthole Surfers* offers an experience usually denied to viewers: a loss of control that the ancient Greeks may have appreciated and the beauty that raw power brings. It is a nonobjective document of some of the Texas band's more extreme and apocalyptic performances which attempts to avoid the constraints of conventional music video formulae. The piece was shot during concerts in New York and California as well as at a house in a Texas suburb. *Witness Butthole Surfers:* Jem Cohen, 43 Grand St., Brooklyn, NY 11211; (718) 387-7580.

AIVF member and multimedia artist Victoria Vesna has produced and directed **Unfolding the Pyramids' Secrets Using Modern Physics** for the Living Physics video journal of the Tesla Foundation. Vesna's videotape describes five modern-day expeditions that search, without digging, for hidden rooms, passageways, and objects in the two Great Pyramids of Egypt—Cheops' and Chephren's—using a technique pioneered in 1965 by Nobel laureate Luis Alvarez, who used cosmic rays to "x-ray" the pyramid of Pharaoh Chephren built in 2500 B.C. In *Unfolding the Pyramids' Secrets*, Vesna based her stylistic approach on an innovative teaching method developed by physicist Bogdan Maglich, who is the scientific director of the production. *Unfolding the Pyramids' Secrets* was recently awarded a Cine Golden Eagle. *Unfolding the Pyramids' Secrets:* The Tesla Foundation, Box 3037, Princeton, NJ 08543; (609) 275-6960; (212) 254-0146.

The Testing the Limits Collective, producers of the award-winning 28-minute video **Testing the Limits: NYC**, is now seeking completion funds for a sequel that extends its documentation of AIDS activism. The group's first piece is a catalogue of the emerging forms of AIDS activism in New York, shot at events that took place from March to August 1987. The footage was cut from more than 100 hours of tape that includes documents of civil disobedience actions, gay pride marches, panel discussions, mass demonstrations, interviews, and safe sex instructions. The second



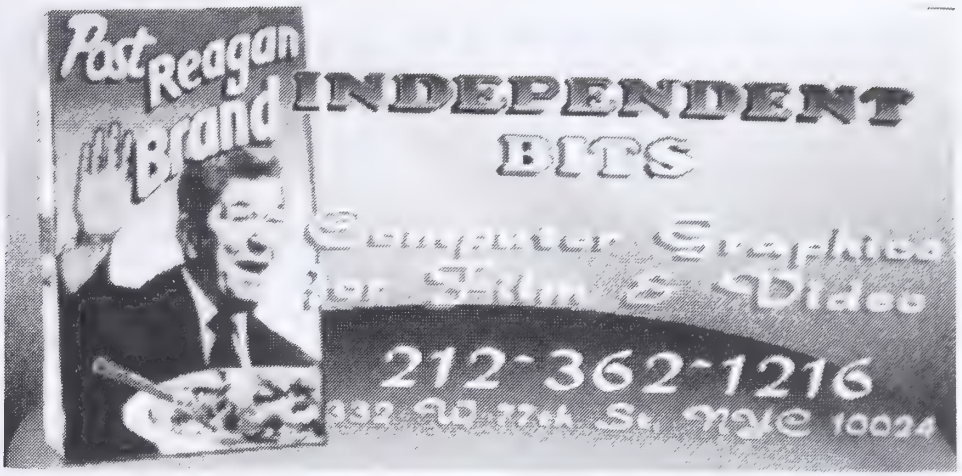
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part of the extended documentary project will reveal the widespread movement that arose from the March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights in October 1987. It will also remind us that—as of July 25, 1988—there are almost 70,000 people with AIDS still waiting for an adequate government response. *Testing the Limits* is a project of Media Network and the Fund for Human Dignity and has so far received support from the New York State Council on the Arts, North Star Fund, and Art Matters. *Testing the Limits:* 329 E. 6th St., #1, New York, NY 10003; (212) 353-2678.

Independent filmmakers St. Clair Bourne and Spike Lee are coproducing a documentary about the making of Lee's latest feature, *Do the Right Thing*, shot on location in the Bedford-Stuyvesant neighborhood in Brooklyn, New York. Bourne, who grew up in Bed-Stuy, is using Lee's production as a point of departure for a view of Black filmmaking's impact on the Black community and society at large. Using the working title **The Right Thing**, Bourne's 60-minute documentary will be a behind-the-camera look at Lee's production, showing how scenes are executed and revealing the director's working style. It will also explore the community in which the feature was shot and the negotiations that went on to get community cooperation. Lee's production, for example, retained the Fruits of Islam, an arm of the Black Muslims headed by Minister Louis Farrakhan, to act as security forces, and a crack house in the immediate vicinity of the film's location was closed. Shooting of Bourne's film wrapped in September, and its release will be timed to coincide with Universal Pictures International's premiere of *Do the Right Thing* next summer. *The Right Thing:* Burnham-Callaghan Associates, 357 W. 55th St. New York, NY 10019; (212) 245-7380.



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CLASSIFIEDS

The Independent's **Classifieds** column includes all listings for "Buy • Rent • Sell," "Freelancers" & "Post-production" categories. It is restricted to members only. Each entry has a **250 character limit** & costs **$20 per issue.** Ads exceeding this length will be edited. Payment must be made at the time of submission. Anyone wishing to run a classified ad more than once must pay for each insertion & indicate the number of insertions on the submitted copy. Each classified ad must be typed, double-spaced & worded exactly as it should appear.

Deadlines for **Classifieds** will be respected. These are the 8th of each month, **two months** prior to the cover date, e.g., November 8 for the January/February issue. Make check or money order—no cash, please—payable to FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

Buy • Rent • Sell

HELP WANTED: Feature film production facility looking for very bright, self-motivated office manager trainee w/ good writing, organizational & telephone skills. Typing 60 wpm. Knowledge of Macintosh a plus. Call (718) 802-0200, 9:30 - 5:30.

MAKE MORE MONEY: *Independent Film & Videomakers Guide*, *Home Video*, *Film/Video Budgets*, *Fade In: The Screenwriting Process*, $18.70 ea. postpaid. *Hollywood Gift Catalog* (joke book), $6.70 ea. Michael Wiese, Box 406, Westport, CT 06881.

WANTED: J.K. Optical Printer. All gates, sequencer. Contact P. Hutton, Bard College, Annandale, NY 12504; (914) 758-6822, ext. 253.

FOR SALE: Angenieux 9.5-57mm w/ Chrosziel Fluid Zoom Drive. Purchased new in 1982. One owner. In Aaton mount. Mint. $1900 or B.O. Tim (716) 889-1810.

FOR SALE: Panasonic 13" color video monitor (BT-S1300N). Hardly used. Asking $500. Dynatech VHS VCR. New. $200. Call Dena (212) 242-8452.

FOR SALE: Sony 6800 3/4" portable field recorder w/ only 25 hr on camera. Incl. battery charger & 6 batts. Asking $2700. Sony Video 8 CamCorder (CCD-C8AF) incl. charger & 2 batts. Asking $800. All equip. in excellent condition. (212) 989-2025, leave mssg.

Freelancers

BETACAM SP with complete remote package (including transportation) available for your independent production. Stereo sound, low light broadcast quality. Call Hal (201) 662-7526.

CAMERAMAN w/ own equipment available. 16 SR, 35 BL, superspeed lenses, video camera, sound equipment, lighting van. Passport. Certified scuba diver. Speak French, a little Spanish. Call (212) 929-7728.

SOUND MAN: Antonio Arroyo. Nagra, Sennheisers, Micron Radio equipment. Feature & doc credits. Bilingual & passport. For booking, call Amy at CEM-Crews (212) 620-0084.

LEGAL SERVICES at reduced rates for AIVF members. Mark Litwak, Attorney at Law, author of *Reel Power*. Member of Bar in NY, CA & Washington, DC. (213) 450-4500

MIAMI—PM/COORDINATOR: Features/ads/music, film/video, crews/equipment/post/locations: Have the elements of your shoot in place & happening when you arrive in S. FL. Competent, professional service. David Betterton, (305) 274-9144 or 271-3271.

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR: Award-winning producer/director specializes in social issue docs, industrials, ads & dramatic work. Brdcst or industrial, video or film. Have crew, equipment & good contacts. Willing to negotiate or bid on projects. (212) 316-6682.

S-VHS INDUSTRIAL camcorder shoot w/ lights, mics, radio mic. Tripod & cameraman: $200/day. Includes free dub. 3/4" editing $25/hr, incl. Amiga 2000 char gen, timecode reader/gen, live camera & editor. Michael, Electronic Visions (212) 691-0375.

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3/4" VIDEO PRODUCTION. 3-tube Sony cameras, tripods, lights, audio, van, experienced cameraman. Very reasonable rates. Smart Video (212) 877-5545.

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SOUND RECORDIST/SOUND EDITOR: Complete Nagra package w/ mikes. Own Steenbeck editing room for sound cutting jobs. Lots of experience in doc & narrative. Good rates. Cathy Calderon (212) 580-2075.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY available for dramatic films. 16 or 35mm productions of any length. Call to see my reel. John (201) 783-7360.

COMPOSER wanted for documentary being made on Iroquois reservation. Original and/or traditional Nat. Amer. music preferred. Possible editing position avail. Also looking for camera people (film/video) fluent in Spanish. Call (718) 965-4509.

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FEATURE CREW NEEDED: 35mm low-budget action-drama to be shot in April. Need experienced DP, sound, gaffer & assistants. Resumés & rates: Independent Film Ventures, Box 17162, Hattiesburg, MS 39402-7162.

PUBLISHED WRITER with production experience available for feature, documentaries and industrial work. Reasonable rates, refs. available. Call Linda Stewart (718) 373-6864.

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NEGATIVE MATCHING: 16mm, super 16, 35mm. Credits include Jim Jarmusch, Wim Wenders & Lizzie Borden. Reliable results at reasonable rates. One White Glove, Tim Brennan, 225 Lafayette St., #914, New York, NY 10012; (212) 966-9484.

3/4" & 3/4" SP BROADCAST QUALITY EDITING w/ A/B roll, $95/hr including operator. Free special FX for AIVF members, incl. slo-mo, freezes, four-quad, graphics. Call HDTV Enterprises, Inc., near Lincoln Center. (212) 874-4524.

16MM FLATBEDS FOR RENT: 6-plate flatbeds for rent in your workspace or fully equipped downtown editing room w/ 24-hour access. Cheapest rates in NYC for independent filmmakers. Call Philmaster Productions (212) 873-4470.

BROADCAST QUALITY VIDEO EDITING: 3/4" Sony BVU-800s BVE 3000 Editor TBCs, switcher, slo-mo, freeze frames, chyron graphics. W/ editor. 900' sq. studio w/ lighting/sound/camera. $50/hr commercial, $35/hr indies. Downtown Brooklyn, A&S (718) 802-7750.

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QUALITY FILM MIXING: $100/hr 16mm or 35mm up to 8 tracks mag or stripe. Transfers from all formats to 16/35. Dubbing/voice recording with/without pix. We've been doing it right for 25 years. V&W/Cutting Edge, 630 Ninth Ave. (at 44 St.), (212) 757-5221.

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POST ON THE COAST. Relaxed off-line TC editing in Maine, multi-format (3/4", 1/2" incl. SEG, freezes, Chyron, camera), software-based A/B system, edit list generation & skiing too! Cuts only as low as $20/hr. AIVF discount. Expanded Video (207) 773-7005.

VIDEO 8 EDITING: color correction, slo-mo, still, PCM digital sound mix/dub/rec. Transfer. Duplication. Production too. Sony Pro. Reasonable. East Village. Info: Franck Goldberg (212) 677-1679.

OFF-LINE EDITING SUITES for rent, VHS or 3/4. Avail. w/ or w/out editor. $10-$25/hr. Union Square Location, avail. 7 days a week. Call to schedule. (212) 477-6009.

NEGATIVE MATCHING: Exp. neg cutter for 16 & 35mm. For Sale: 35 & 16mm film splicers; (3) 28 x 60 editing tables. Production office avail for rent, midtown area. Lou Somerstein (212) 581-3728; after 6 pm: 532-1924.

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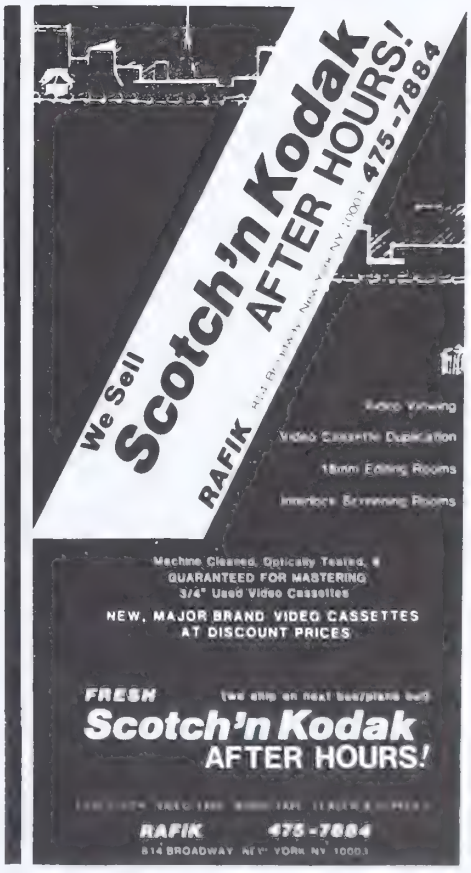
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NOTICES

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. **The Independent** reserves the right to edit for length.

Deadlines for **Notices** will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date, e.g., November 8 for the January/February issue. Send to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Conferences • Workshops

BOSTON FILM/VIDEO FOUNDATION workshops beginning Nov.: Advanced Amiga, Nov. 2; Writing & Selling for Film & TV, Nov. 5 & 6; Intro to MIDI, Nov. 7-14; Animation Workshop, Nov. 10-Dec. 8; Intro to Video Paint Systems, Nov. 12, Dec. 3; Doc. Scriptwriting, Nov. 14-21; Prod. Mgmt., Nov. 19 & 20; Amiga Graphics, Nov. 19; Intro to 3/4" Editing, Nov. 19-22; Developing Dramas for Interactive Video Disc, Nov. 28-Dec. 5; 16mm Film Editing, Dec. 3-13; Advanced Paint Systems: 3D Modeling, Dec. 4. Contact: BF/VF, 1126 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02215; (617) 536-1540.

ARTISTS WORKSHOPS IN ST. PAUL: Sponsored by Resources & Counseling with U.S. Small Business Admin. Time management workshop, Nov. 7; Business Filing in Minnesota, Nov. 21; The Artist & the IRS: Examination of the Latest Tax Law Changes, Nov. 15. Workshops take place at Landmark Center. Contact Daniel Gabriel, 416 Landmark Ctr., 75 W. 5th St., St. Paul, MN 55102.

UNIV. OF WISCONSIN/MILWAUKEE: Industry workshops sponsored by Univ. Outreach Communication Program. Making a Good Script Great, Nov. 5-6, Doral Inn, NYC; How to Break in & Advance, Package & Pitch Projects Plus Basic Dealmaking & Entertainment Law for the Layman, Nov. 19-20, Holiday Inn Downtown, Atlanta. Contact Noncredit Registration Office, UW-Milwaukee, 929 N. Sixth St., Milwaukee, WI 53203; (414) 227-3236.

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE WORKSHOPS & SEMINARS: At AFI Campus: Writing to Sell: Screenwriter as Storyteller, Nov. 19; Writing TV Sitcoms, Dec. 3 & 4; New Perspective on Casting & Auditioning for Actors & Directors, Nov. 12; Prod. Software Update, Dec. 10. In New York: Packaging & Selling Your Project for TV & Actor's Workshop: Casting & Audition Techniques, Nov. 19. Atlanta: Packaging & Selling Your Project for TV, Nov. 5. Chicago: Survey of Motion Pic Pre-Prod., Nov. 5; Breaking into Network TV, Nov. 12. San Francisco: Art of Prod. Design, Nov. 12. Honolulu: AFI Director's Seminar at the East-West Ctr. during Hawaii Int'l Film Fest., Nov. 27-Dec. 3. Contact Public Service Programs, AFI, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027; (213) 856-7690.

MEDIA ALLIANCE ANNUAL CONFERENCE: Rescheduled to Nov. 17-19 in NYC, will coincide w/ 20th anniv. celebration of Film/Video Arts. Contact: Media Alliance, c/o WNET, 356 W. 58th St., New York, NY; (212) 560-2919.

Films • Tapes Wanted

SUBMIT SHORT FUNNY TAPES for *Cinemax Variety Special*. Up to 4 min. long. Send 1/2" or 3/4" cassette with SASE to Mike's Talent Show, 12 Spring St., New York, NY 10012.

FAIR VISION RATIO: Nat'l open screening & exchange program of new short works on film & video seeks submissions for monthly screenings. Send tapes in 3/4", VHS, S-8, or 16mm film w/ SAS mailer to Fair Vision Ratio, 911 Contemporary Arts, 518 Jones Bldg, 1331 Third Ave., Seattle, WA 98101.

EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHER/DISTRIBUTOR seeks independent videos & films for elementary school market (guidance, drug educ., health, family issues). Contact Susan Diamond, Sunburst Communications, 39 Washington Ave., Pleasantville, NY 10570; (914) 769-5030.

LESBIAN & GAY TAPES & FILMS WANTED: For exhibition in fall '89 at Collective for Living Cinema in NYC. Work of any length or style will be previewed by programmers. Deadline: Dec. 15. Send VHS copy, w/ SAS mailer for return shipping to: Collective for Living Cinema, 41 White St., New York, NY 10013, attn: J. Walsh. No telephone inquiries.

CHOPLOGIC VIDEO is seeking film/video works for new nationally syndicated cable TV special. All work submitted, from abstract to commercial, given equal consideration. Submissions should be 3/4" or VHS and clearly labeled w/ title, name, address, phone. In additional to cablecasts, Choplogic Video will also have NYC screenings. Choplogic Video, 151 First Ave., Studio D, New York, NY 10003; (212) 713-5754.

Opportunities • Gigs

IMAGE FILM/VIDEO CTR seeks full-time exec. director starting Jan. 1, 1989. Responsibilities incl. staff & facilities mgmt, fundraising, film & video exhibition, workshop development, monthly newsletter & directing annual Atlanta Film & Video Fest. Generous vacation & health benefits. Salary negotiable. Contact IMAGE, 75 Bennett St., NW, Ste. M-1, Atlanta, GA 30309; (404) 352-4225.

VIDEO POOL accepting proposals from videomakers, artists & producers working in video, audio, film & other related technologies to instruct workshops. Please submit resumé, outline of proposed workshop & equip. requirements. Travel & honoraria provided for all accepted proposals. Contact Michael Drabot, Prod. Coordinator, Video Pool, 300-100 Arthur St., Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B-1H3, Canada; (204) 949-9134.

NEWTON TV FOUNDATION seeks proposals for the prod. of docs on important contemporary issues. Selected producers will be provided w/ 3/4" production & post-prod. facilities & other support. Proposals may be submitted at any time. To find out if project is suitable, submit 1-page typewritten project description & resumé or call. Contact Newton TV Foundation, 1608 Beacon St., Waban, MA 02168; (617) 965-8477.

Publications • Software

GRANTS FOR ARTS & CULTURAL PROGRAMS: New edition now available, $40/copy. Contact Foundation Center, 79 Fifth Ave., Dept. AV, New York, NY 10003; (800) 424-9836.

INT'L DIRECTORY OF FILM & TV DOCUMENTATION CENTERS: 3rd edition now available for compilation of over 100 entries describing world's major collections of published & unpublished material relating to film & TV. Price: $45. St. James Press, 233 E. Ontario St., Ste. 600, Chicago, IL 60611; (312) 787-5800.

SOMETHING PRESSING: GUIDE TO PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR THE VIDEO & FILMMAKER now available from NY Media Alliance. Booklet for artists includes tips on relating to press, distributors & exhibitors as well as practical info on conducting press campaigns & writing press materials. Also, annotated press list w/ details on deadlines, frequency of publication & audience served. Press list & lists of distributors & exhibitors across US also available on pressure sensitive labels in variety of formats. Media Alliance, c/o WNET, 356 W. 58th St., New York, NY 10019; (212) 560-2919.

SUPER-8 IN THE VIDEO AGE: *Using Amateur Movie Film Today*, 3rd Edition, by Bob Brodsky & Toni Treadway now available. Price: $16.95, or Spanish edition, $8. Contact Brodsky & Treadway, 10-R Oxford St., Somerville, MA 02143-1608; (617) 666-3372.

Resources • Funds

MASSACHUSETTS COUNCIL ON ARTS & HUMANITIES Contemporary Arts funding program deadline, Feb. 6: Art Exchange, provides funds for non-MA resident artists to present completed works in MA & MA artists to present completed works outside MA; New Works, funds for creation of new works for MA premiere. Open to artists in all disciplines. Proposals must be sponsored by MA cultural institutions. Contact Contemporary Arts staff; (617) 727-3668.

REAL ART WAYS Media Access Studio is multi-track recording studio & 3/4" video shooting & editing facility for creation, completion or documentation of work. Call for special rates to independents. Also, Fusion/Fission Regrants: Funds available for innovative interdisciplinary work by New England artists. Deadline: Jan. 1989. Contact Real Art Ways, 94 Allyn St., Hartford, CT 06103-1402; (203) 525-5521.

FRONTLINE: Hr-long weekly public affairs series broadcast nationally on PBS will consider proposals on public policy issues from doc. producers whose prior work has demonstrated ability to combine good journalism & filmmaking. Submit 1-2 page treatment or rough-cut of completed (or near completed) film on 3/4" or VHS. Deadline: Feb. 1 for 1990 season. Contact Marrie Campbell, series editor, *Frontline*, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA 02134.

SPAIN RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS: Council for Int'l Exchange of Scholars announces opening of competition for grants for individual research in Spain during '89-90 academic year. Eligible fields incl. arts & communications. Requirements: U.S. citizenship, Ph.D or appropriate terminal degree & sufficient competence in oral & written Spanish for proposed research. Appl. deadline: Jan. 1, 1989. Contact Robert Burnett, Spain Research Fellowships, CIES, 11 Dupont Circle, NW, Ste. 300, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 939-5414.

How Serious Can You Get In Super 8?



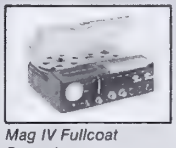
Ask Mark Pirro!

"Very serious, believe me!" he says. "My first feature was shot and edited in Super 8. It has been very successful in the video market and it really started me on my filmmaking career."

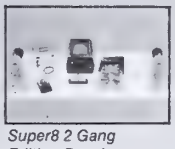
According to Mark the training he got using the Super8 equipment prepared him for the opportunity to advance rapidly in a business that only talks to experienced professionals. He had the right stuff when the time came. He's now a working writer/director with a full-length feature in 35mm, (DEATHROW GAMESHOW) - and more on the way. But . . . you guessed it . . . he's just finished another Super 8 feature, CURSE OF THE QUEERWOLF. "I really like the flexibility, economy and convenience of Super 8," he said recently. "On a limited budget, to get a film gloss, it's the way to go. It's a format that makes a lot of sense."

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CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING: Open Solicitation deadlines: Jan. 6 & Apr. 21. Contact: Television Program Fund, CPB, 1111 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS grants deadlines: Nov. 14 for film/video production & Jan. 30 for AFI/NEA film preservation program. Contact: Media Arts, NEA, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

FILM BUREAU of Film/Video Arts offers grants to NY State exhibition programs sponsored by nonprofit organizations. Matching funds up to $300 available for film rentals & up to $200 per speaking engagement for presentations by filmmakers, producers, directors, technicians & scholars. Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Charles Vassallo, Film Bureau Coordinator, F/VA, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003-4797; (212) 673-9361.

NEW YORK COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES: Call for proposals for Cultural Literacy in a Multi-Cultural Society, to support projects of free events for general audiences. Deadline: Dec. 15. Contact: NYCH, 198 Broadway, New York, NY 10038; (212) 233-1131.

CHECKERBOARD FOUNDATION invites applications for 1988-89 postproduction awards. 2-4 grants, from $5,000 to $10,000, awarded in spring 1989. Only NYS residents may apply. Deadline: Mar. 31. For appls, write Checkerboard Foundation, Box 222, Ansonia Sta., New York, NY 10023.

Trims & Glitches

KUDOS to Ellen A. Meyers, recipient of Certificate of Merit from Suffolk County Film & Video Fest for *Just Keep Going*.

CONGRATS to Joan Harvey who won gold film awards from the Houston Int'l Film Fest & Philadelphia Int'l Film Fest for *Voices in Dissent*.

CATHERINE RUSSO won 1st Place at the Montreal Women's Int'l Film/Video Fest for *Enough Crying of Tears*. Kudos!

CONGRATULATIONS to AIVF member winners of Western States Regional Media Arts Fellowships: Gregg Araki, Rose Bond, Carolyn Crowder, Arthur Dong, Mark Dworkin, Kayo Hatta, Lynn Hershman, Mark Kitchell, Lisa Leeman, Curt Madison, Donna Matorin, Laurie Meeker, Heather Dew Oaksen, Lucy Ostrander, Christine Panushka, Miguel Pendas, Jonathan Reiss, Marlon Riggs, Kim Shelton, Naomi Sodetani & Bruce & Norman Yonemoto.

KUDOS to finalists in the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's Open Solicitation: Irving Saraf & Allie Light, John Schott, Gene Searchinger & George Miller, Steven Okazaki, Hector Galan, Marlon T. Riggs, Rose Economou & Brian Kaufman.

CONGRATS to AIVF members who received New York State Council on the Arts Film Prod. awards: Camille Billops, Rachel Field, Ada Gay Griffin & Michelle Parkerson, Todd Haynes, Kathy Kline, Roland Legiardi-Laura, Michael Penland, Bob Rosen, David O. Russell, Maureen Selwood, Renee Tajima & Christine Choy, Dan Weissman & Lucy Winer.

PROGRAM NOTES

Morton Marks
Business Manager/Audio Director

The phone rings: "Do you know where I can get funding for my project?" "Do you know what distributors would be interested in a short film?" It rings again: "Do you have any information on super 8?" And again.... Such requests for information and others covering practically any topic in film and video are asked of the AIVF staff daily. We attempt to answer or assist in resolving myriad problems, but not all information can be conveyed in a short phone call or a brief visit to our offices. Sometimes additional research is necessary. The current expansion of AIVF's publishing and book sales activities will now enable our members to continue that research.

In the near future, AIVF will be announcing a major update of the list of books we sell, with over 50 new titles covering a variety of topics—business and law, audio, fundraising, continuity, screenwriting, third world cinema, gay and lesbian cinema, production formats, cable, public broadcasting, animation, distribution, lighting, super 8, marketing, and more. Our new titles come from publishers from across the U.S. and include many books and pamphlets previously offered only by other media arts organizations.

For instance, the American Film Institute's *Factfiles* are a series of reference documents on specific genres and topics. We will now offer AFI *Factfiles* on: *Animation*, *Third World Cinema*, *Film/TV Grants*, *Broadcast TV*, *Asian American Cinema*, and *Black & American Film/Video*. Each document provides the researcher with a wealth of resource material specific to the topic: organizations, significant books, periodicals, festivals, distributors, and a bibliography.

Another offering is the Participate project's newly released *Directory of Public Access Cable Channels and Related Video Resources in New York State*, which list county, state, and national resources, as will as indices of all the cable systems active and doing business in the state. Public access cable TV is an important way for people to reach the people by the people and for the people. For those interested in a national perspective on cable, the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers' *Cable Programming Resource Directory* will be helpful. This guide details community, national, and international cable TV production facilities and programming sources. Then there's Paper Tiger TV's *Deep Dish Directory*, which contains a national list of access centers and cable systems, and also lists hundreds of individual public access producers.

Other publications from media organizations on our updated booklist are the Media Network's various *Guides* on social-issue media geared towards educators, programmers, librarians, and community organizers. These *Guides* contain descriptions of specific films, practical tips on effective presentation, and a list of distributors. We will have available *Guides* on *Central America*, *Apartheid and the Southern Africa Region*, *Images of Color*, *Community Media*, *Reproductive Rights*, *Adoption*, and *Green Gems: The Environment*.

With the wealth of information on "acceptable" formats, finding information on super 8 is difficult and finding reliable information is even harder. *Super 8 in the Video Age*, by Toni Treadway and Bob Brodsky and just released by the International Center for 8mm Video and Film, should make small format aficionados happy. Treadway and Brodsky's new edition contains up-to-date advice and technical information, as well as a current list of resources for anyone working with super 8 in the late eighties.

AIVF's new arrivals also include *Masters of Light* and *The Technique of Lighting for Television and Motion Pictures*. The former features discussions with leading cinematographers and the latter presents a complete technical guide to lighting. Our audio section now includes *Audiocraft*, by the National Federation of Community Broadcasters, which introduces the reader to the tools and techniques of audio production. Also useful for audiophiles is *Microphones*, by Martin Clifford. Finally, *Audio in Media*, by Stanley Alten, offers a comprehensive survey of sound production for film- and videomaking.

These books and booklets and our much longer list of titles provide a centralized source of assistance to independent film/videomakers. If, however, our selection does not include books that reflect your concerns, let us know. AIVF's book sales are intended to help you by creating easier and greater access to information.

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AIVF THANKS

The Emergency Tax Equity Fund, established by AIVF to support efforts to convince Congress to exempt independent film- and videomakers from the Uniform Capitalization rules of the 1986 Tax Reform Act [see "Media Clips" and "Legal Briefs" in this issue] and the Emergency Legislative Fund, which is being used to advocate a National Independent Program Service for public television, have received contributions from:

Ben Actenberg, John Aieman, Marie France Alderman, Ann Alter, Martin Andrews, Joseph Angio, Jeff Baker, Muriel Balash, Chris Beaver, Thomas Borrup, Pearl Bowser, Liane Brandon, Susan Brockman, Betsy Bromberg, Scott Campbell, Charlotte Cerf, Steve Channing, Jack Churchill, Cinebar Productions, Scott Counsell, Carol Cramer, Cyclone Productions, William Dance, Thomas Davenport, Marilyn DeMoss, Tina Difeliciantonio, Kathleen Dowdey, Constance Dry, Harvey Edwards, Elaine Summers Experimental Intermedia Foundation, Sian Evans, Eric Farber, Fred Fischer, Five Point Films, Florentine Films, Frederic Fischer Films, Monica Freeman, Victor Fridman, Peter Friedman, Robert Gates, Howard Gladstone, Jill Godmilow, Cary Goldweber, Bennett Grossman, David Haas, Jean Haynes, Michael Hazard, Samuel Henriques, Larry Hott, Richard Howorth, International Cinema, Mark Irwin, Jill Janows, Beverly Jones, Michelle Kamhi, Alan Kaplan, Kartemquin Films, Phil Katzman, Nick Kaufman, Joseph Kleinman, Kenneth Kobland, Lucy Kostelanetz, Barbara Kristaponis, Jill Kroesen, Ronald Light, James Lipscomb, Christine Lombard, Martha Stuart Communications, Leslie Mason, Mona Massoff, Bienvenida Matias, Deborah Matlack, Matthew Pergerson Films, Richard Mattson, Timothy McGuinness, Margaret McLagan, John Miglietta, Bianca Miller, Chonk Moonhunter, Eve Muir, Ray Munro, J.J. Murphy, Catherine Neukum, Timothy Ney, Richard Numeroff, Sarah O'Brien, Todd O'Connell, Omnificent Systems, Anita Ondrusek, Carrie Oviatt, Pacific St. Film Project, Philip Paternite, Lindsay Pearson, Dosne Pentes, Philmaster Productions, Public Production Group, Gordon Quinn, Karen Ranucci, John Raugalis, Robin Reidy, Richard Klein Photography, Robert Richter, Steven Rosofsky, Stephen Roszell, Ann Ruark, Susan Saltz, Gary Samuels, William Sarokin, Robin Schanzenbach, Ingrid Scheib Rothbart, Anita Schifando, Joan Shigekawa, George Shkapenko, Draper Shreeve, Sam Sills, Howard Silver, Shelly Silver, Tony Silver, William Simonett, Daniel Sipe, Martin Smith, Helena Solberg Ladd, John Spellos, Robert Spencer, Frances Spielman, Peggy Stern, Joseph Stillman, Henry Stokes Jr., Bruno Strapko, Sara Stuart, Ann Tegnell, William Turnley III, Cecilia Domeyko Vera, Video Dialog Productions, Joshua Waletzky, Zachary Winestine, Megan Elper Wood, Leonard Yakir, Lise Yasui.

OUR APOLOGIES

The photograph from *My Brother's Wedding* that accompanied the article "Charles Burnett's Realism" in the October issue of *The Independent* was incorrectly credited. That photo appeared courtesy of Jane Balfour Films in London.

DROP US A LINE

FIVF now has a celestial mailbox. If you also subscribe to MCI's electronic service, you can send messages from your modem to *The Independent*. Just address correspondence to FIVF, attn: The Independent. Telex messages from other countries can be sent to this mailbox, too.

COMING AND GOING

People calling AIVF will hear a new voice answer the phone. Kelly Anderson, a Brown University graduate and *Paper Tiger TV* producer, is our new administrative assistant, whom we warmly welcome. She replaces Emily Fisher, who has gone on to pursue her work in documentary production and whom we wish all the best.



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CORRECTION

A limited number of invitations to the 1988 AIVF Indie Awards included a list of the AIVF Board of Directors which was incomplete and contained inaccuracies. The list of then-current directors who were responsible for the selection of this year's award winners and the planning of the event should have appeared as follows:

Rachel Field, Chairperson
Robert Richter, President
Loni Ding, Vice President
Wendy Lidell, Secretary
Richard Lorber, Treasurer
Robert Aaronson
Adrianne Benton
Christine Choy
Regge Life
Deanna Morse
Barton Weiss
Lawrence Sapadin (executive director)

The additional FIVF Board members, Lisa Frigand, Tom Luddy, Steve Savage, and John Taylor Williams also served at that time. Several newly-elected directors began their term on October 15, 1988, immediately following the awards program. They are Skip Blumberg, Dai Sil Kim-Gibson, Lourdes Portillo, and Deborah Shaffer.

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COVER: Those who have only heard about Andy Warhol's films from the 1960s had a chance to acquaint themselves with his output last spring, when the Whitney Museum of American Art presented "The Films of Andy Warhol: An Introduction." In this issue, filmmaker and scholar Paul Arthur uses this occasion to reflect on Warhol's output and inventions as a filmmaker—his framing and structuring of time, his displacement of drama from the screen to the conditions of viewing, his interest in incident over plot. Warhol's *The Chelsea Girls* (cover), *Empire*, *Kiss*, and *Blow Job* were among the films included in the Whitney's program. Photo: Billy Name/Factory Foto, courtesy Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive.

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LETTERS

SHARED CREDIT

To the editor:

Many thanks for the national perspective you gave to the local and regional organizing that has been so critical in the field's campaign to establish an independent program service within public television ["From Boston to Honolulu: Organizing for the National Independent Program Service," October 1988].

Because *The Independent* has served as the key historical record of this effort, I wanted to add to the record a name that should have been included in the report from San Franciso that you published. Jeffrey Chester's contributions to the campaign in California and to the national effort cannot be overstated. He was one of the leading visionaries behind the creation of the Association of California Independent Public Television Producers. He spearheaded ACIPTP's 1984 lobbying for a 10 percent set-aside for independents in state funding of California's public television, was one of the authors of the California paper that was the precursor to the N.I.P.S. proposal, and, perhaps most important, was the key strategist for the wide media coverage the proposal received throughout the United States.

While a lot of us were involved in the phone calls, letters, and meetings that advanced the N.I.P.S. proposal far beyond any of our original expectations, none of us should overlook Jeff Chester's tireless and singular work to bring our concerns before the public.

—Julie Mackaman
Film Arts Foundation
San Francisco, CA

ROBESON FUND RESPONDS

To the editor:

While we were delighted to have the Paul Robeson Fund profiled in *The Independent* ["Media Clips," October 1988], a few corrections and clarifications are necessary. The Paul Robeson Fund empowers its peer panel to make grants and make recommendations to our donor-advised funds. Last year that panel awarded $75,000 in direct grants, and this year they awarded $100,000 in direct grants.

Contrary to the information you published, the Women's Project, the largest donor advised fund within the Paul Robeson Fund, is composed of women donors and is not a part of the Funding Exchange's general support, which is secured from individuals and, to a lesser extent, foundations. I hope these clarifications are helpful.

—Lillian Jiménez
Program Officer, the Paul Robeson Fund
for Film and Video
New York, NY

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Letters to **The Independent** should be addressed to the editor. Letters may be edited for length.

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VICTORY FOR INDEPENDENTS: CONGRESS CREATES AN INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION SERVICE

During the final days of the 100th Congress, the campaign of the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers for a national independent program service achieved success when both houses approved a reauthorization bill for public broadcasting containing provisions for an "independent production service" (IPS). Although the bill does not specify the amount of the allocation, the report from the Senate Communications Subcommittee chairman Daniel Inouye to the full Senate directs the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) to provide the new service with "at least $6 million...for each of the first three years of service to be utilized for production costs." The report also requires CPB "to provide start-up costs for the installation of the service this year with funds from the CPB administrative budget."

The legislation also guarantees increased funding for public broadcasting's minority consortia, which the Coalition and representatives of the existing consortia, led by the National Asian American Telecommunications Association, also advocated. The Senate subcommittee recommended funding for the five consortia of $3-million per year in addition to the $800,000 they currently receive.

"This is a major victory for the independent producing community," says Lawrence Sapadin, co-chair of the National Coalition and executive director of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers. "The new legislation will provide independents with a secure, institutional base of support within public broadcasting and a greater say in the policies and procedures that govern the funding of independently-produced programs. This is also a victory for the American public, who will now be able to see on television the most diverse and innovative programming," observes Sapadin.

To underscore its commitment to programming that goes beyond the current public TV fare, Congress amended its "Declaration of Policy" for CPB to state, "[I]t is in the public interest to encourage the development of programming that involves creative risks and that addresses the needs of unserved and underserved audiences, particularly children and minorities."

Early in October, the House and Senate subcommittees responsible for telecommunications resolved the differences between their two versions of a reauthorization bill for CPB. That compromise bill retained the language of the House version that called for the establishment of the IPS. A controversial proposal by the Senate subcommittee that would have rerouted 80 percent of national programming dollars to public TV stations—which was opposed by CPB, as well as independent and minority program producers—was dropped during the House-Senate negotiations. The bill also sets ceilings for federal appropriations of $245-million in 1991, $265-million in 1992, and $285-million in 1993.

On October 7, the full Senate approved the amended bill. Then, on October 19, the House approved the bill but made minor changes in the language pertaining to the replacement of the public broadcasting satellite. Finally, on the evening of October 20, the Senate voted in favor of the final version. The last step in the process will occur when the bill reaches President Reagan's desk to be signed into law or vetoed. Since Congress lowered the funding levels authorized in the bill in response to earlier objections by the Office of Management and Budget, a presidential veto is not anticipated.

The language that establishes the IPS is concise. As part of its general obligation to substantially fund independent production, CPB must provide "adequate funds for an independent production service." This new service will be incorporated separately from CPB, in Washington, D.C., for the purpose of contracting with CPB for the production of independently produced programs. To implement the new legislation, Congress directs CPB to work with "organizations or associations of independent producers...to develop a plan and budget for the operation of such service that is acceptable to the Corporation." Once in service, the IPS will contract with CPB "for the expenditure of funds for the production of public television programs by independent producers and independent production entities." Congress also mandates that the IPS use its funds exclusively "to expand the diversity and innovativeness of programming available to public broadcasting."

Although the IPS' $6-million allocation is less than the "substantial" funds that CPB is required to reserve for independent production under the 1978 Public Telecommunications Act, the Congressional report on the new legislation makes it clear that the IPS budget does not "exhaust CPB's statutory obligation to provide a substantial portion of its programming fund to independent producers and productions" and that CPB must continue or increase utilization of independent producers "throughout the structure of public broadcasting." The legislative history of the 1978 law indicates that Congress meant "substantial"

EXCERPT FROM THE PUBLIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1988

(iii)(I) For fiscal year 1990 and succeeding fiscal years, the Corporation [CPB] shall, in carrying out its obligations under clause (i) with respect to public television programming, provide adequate funds for an independent production service.

(II) Such independent production service shall be separate from the Corporation and shall be incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia for the purpose of contracting with the Corporation for the expenditure of funds for the production of public television programs by independent producers and independent production entities.

(III) The Corporation shall work with organizations or associations of independent producers or independent production entities to develop a plan and budget for the operation of such service that is acceptable to the Corporation.

(IV) The Corporation shall ensure that the funds provided to such independent production service shall be used exclusively in pursuit of the Corporation's obligation to expand the diversity and innovativeness of programming available to public broadcasting.

(V) The Corporation shall report annually to Congress regarding the activities and expenditures of the independent production service. At the end of fiscal year 1992, the Corporation shall submit a report to Congress evaluating the performance of the independent production service in light of its mission to expand the diversity and innovativeness of programming available to public broadcasting.

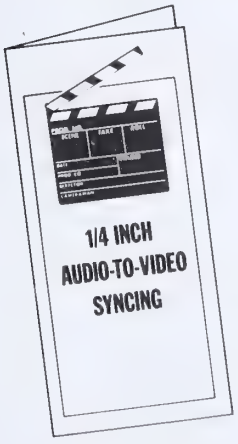


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to be no less than 50 percent of the national program funds or about $18-million in 1988.

Finally, Congress appears to have changed the legal character of CPB's funding from contracts to grants, which may eliminate some of the contract disputes between independents and CPB about rights and the Corporation's share of ancillary revenues.

Congress' enactment of the IPS represents the culmination of a two-year legislative and public education campaign by the Coalition aimed at convincing Congress that CPB has failed to provide substantial funding for independent productions, to provide the public with diverse programming, and to adequately support the distribution of minority programming through the existing minority consortia. In the spring of 1987 the Coalition drafted its proposal for a national independent program service and presented it at oversight hearings on public broadcasting held in Congress in November 1987 and at reauthorization hearings in March 1988. Throughout the hearings, Coalition representatives argued that public TV had drifted from its mandate to provide an alternative to commercial broadcasting as a result of political and financial pressures favoring non-controversial programming that would appeal to underwriters and upscale viewers. These concerns were echoed by other media commentators in testimony and in the press. Independents proposed the IPS as a way to insulate a portion of production funds from these institutional pressures and dedicate them to experimentation and diversity. In the end, the structure of the new service, as defined in both the reauthorization bill and in the report language from the Senate subcommittee, bears remarkable similarity to the original architecture of the Coalition's proposal.

Despite the extensive organizing campaign

EXCERPT FROM THE REPORT ON THE PUBLIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1988 BY SENATOR DANIEL INOUYE, CHAIR OF THE SENATE COMMUNICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

For almost as long as public broadcasting has existed, there have been two major concerns among the independent production community: The lack of funding for independent productions and a perceived inaccessibility of the system to independent producers.

Both the House and Senate committees heard testimony from independent producers and from representatives of the public broadcasting community regarding their views on the sufficiency of use of independent productions by the public broadcasting system. Independent producers' concerns largely are based on the perception of an increasingly "closed system" structure of public broadcasting, in which the CPB and the stations control access to the public airwaves.

Although the CPB has testified that approximately half of its television program funds are allocated to the work of independent producers, representatives of the independent production community suggest that funds to independent productions are significantly less. The Congress is not satisfied that the CPB has allocated sufficient funds to smaller individual producers working independently of stations or station consortia. Greater effort is required to fulfill the congressional intent and achieve the statutory objective of promoting greater innovation and diversity of opportunity and expression in the programming supported by the CPB.

To address this ongoing problem the substitute [to the original bill] establishes an Independent Production Service, IPS, an entity developed for the sole purpose of funding independent productions, to provide producers increased access to the public television system, foster an improved cooperative working relationship between the independent production community and the public broadcasting system and bring innovative programming to the American people. We expect that, despite the advent of IPS, the public broadcasting community will continue to utilize or increase utilization of independent producers or independent productions throughout the structure of public broadcasting, including SPC, program funds and other program selection and funding processes. Neither the creation of the IPS or its funding is intended to exhaust the CPB's statutory obligation to provide a substantial portion of its programming fund to independent producers and productions.

We intend that an aggregate initial amount of at least $6 million be provided by the CPB for IPS for each of the first 3 years of service to be utilized for production costs. It is our further intent that funds provided IPS by the CPB be utilized for production costs. We do not intend that overhead and promotional costs of the service be paid from this initial annual funding of $6 million. We assume that the IPS will be in full service by fall of 1989, with the understanding that CPB will provide start-up costs for the installation of the service this year with funds from the CPB administrative budget. However, the funding for IPS programming provided by the CPB shall come from allocations available for television national programming.

Section (II) provides that the Service shall be separate from the CPB and will be incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia for the purposes of contracting with the CPB. We intend that the structure and composition of the Service's governing board will be acceptable to the CPB.

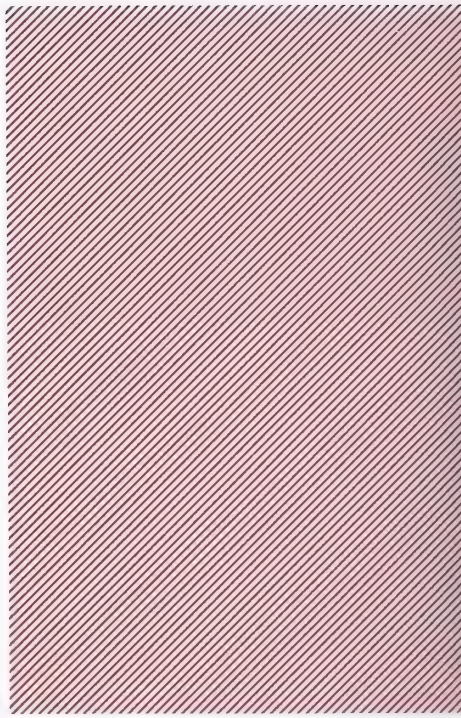
Section (III) provides that the CPB will work with independent producers and production entities to develop and plan an acceptable budget for the operation of the IPS. We recommend that personnel from public television stations as well as independent producers be involved in the planning of the advisory board and that an appropriate number of such personnel will serve on the advisory council and governing board. The advisory board will provide added input to the decision-making governing board. We intend that participation in this service will be open and that present or past association with public television stations will not automatically exclude a particular producer from participation. The determination of who is eligible for funding by the IPS will be made by the governing board or the advisory council.

Section (IV) ensures that funds provided by the CPB to the IPS will be used exclusively to ensure the Corporation's obligation to "expand the diversity and innovativeness of programming available to public broadcasting".

It is also recommended that the CPB ensure that the IPS make a special commitment and effort to produce programs by and about minorities in addition to continuing its support of the minority consortia. Minority programming is an essential foundation of public broadcasting. The existing minority consortia which represents the United States' largest and fastest growing ethnic and racial minority communities, have been an effective vehicle despite a very minimal funding level of only $800,000. The CPB should continue and expand its work and commitment to the minority communities in these creative ways in order to improve incorporation of minority programming and producers into the system and to help cultivate and further increase the participation of ethnic and racial audiences in public broadcasting. The bill does not mandate any specific level of funding for the minority consortia. In an effort to ensure support for culturally diverse programming, we assume that sufficient funds will be allocated for the minority consortia and recommend an annual allocation level of an additional $3 million.

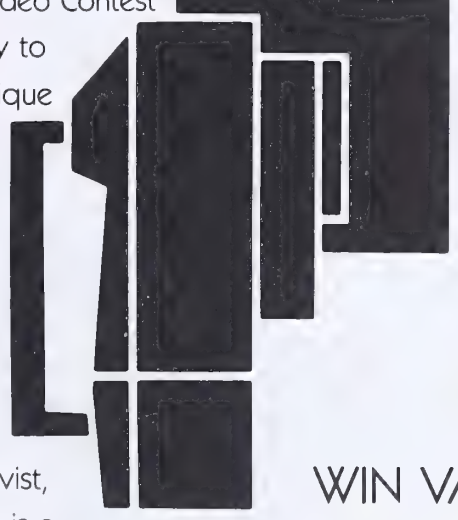
Section (V) requires that the CPB report to Congress each year on the activities and expenditures of the IPS. At the end of fiscal year 1992, the CPB must submit an evaluation report on the performance of the IPS to Congress. This report shall examine the IPS with regard to its mission to "expand the diversity and innovativeness of programming available to public broadcasting". We also expect the IPS to contribute to public television's historical and traditional commitment to children's television. Innovative and diverse programming geared to the child, as well as the adult, audience should be the goal of IPS. We will closely monitor the performance of IPS in this area.

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surrounding these events, all representatives of the Coalition agree that the task of realizing the IPS will be as difficult—if not more so—as persuading Congress of its necessity. Robert Richter, independent producer, AIVF president, and chair of AIVF's Advocacy Committee, comments, "We have achieved a great victory, but we now face a tremendous challenge. We have to prove that we can do what we say we want to do. Independent producers across the country must continue to work together to make it a success." California Newsreel president and co-chair of the Coalition Larry Daressa agrees that much work needs to be done in the next few years in order to cement the congressional victory. "This is not designed to be the answer to the economic crisis of independent production," Daressa observes. "It can do a limited number of broadcast experiments to establish the case for an extension of such programs. The whole point is to establish the viability of an alternative to television as it is presently conceived, not to provide that alternative."

James Yee, executive director of NAATA, makes a similar point, adding that Congress' largesse towards the minority consortia comes after "10 years of nothing" but that NAATA and the other organizations have no intention of using increased funding only to continue current activities. To determine appropriate directions for growth Yee says that the consortia "will go through an internal review process." NAATA, Yee also notes, wants "to make effective use of these new dollars by increasing the number of programs available."

Like the revamped minority consortia, the IPS now exists only on paper. In anticipation of Congressional passage, Coalition representatives met with public broadcasters and proposed that CPB appoint a liaison to work with a "temporary incorporating committee" of the Coalition that will be responsible for setting up the IPS. That committee consists of Linda Blackaby of the Neighborhood Film and Video Project (PA), independent producers Loni Ding (CA) and Hector Galan (TX), the Coalition's legislative liaison Larry Hall (CA), Sapadin (NY), and Gail Silva, executive director of the Film Arts Foundation (CA). The Coalition hopes to convene the temporary committee in Washington, D.C., before the end of this year to approve preliminary articles of incorporation, bylaws, and a provisional list of initial members of the governing board and to meet with CPB representatives about plans for incorporation. The group has set March 1, 1989, as the goal for incorporation and designation of a governing board, which must be approved by CPB. The IPS is scheduled to begin operations on October 1, 1989.

With victory in hand, the Coalition is not ready to disband, however. In the next few months, the organization will consider the question of how it can maintain a permanent presence in Washington so that the hard-won gains in the public TV arena can be protected. For Hall, the Coalition should play an oversight role for the IPS. "We must maintain accountability of the IPS board to the independent community. At the same time we must maintain the presence of the independent community outside the board," he says. "It is now up to us to make this new program service work," says Sapadin. "We have a great task ahead of us, full of difficulty and full of promise."

MARTHA GEVER

The AIVF Advocacy Committee, the standing committee which has participated in the IPS campaign as well as other public policy issues, meets periodically at AIVF's office, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012. Any AIVF member is invited to attend and contribute. For information concerning future meetings, contact: Lawrence Sapadin at the address above or call (212) 473-3400.

TAX LAW PASSES WITHOUT EXEMPTION FOR INDEPENDENTS

On October 22, 1988, the day before Congress recessed to campaign for themselves and a new President, freelance artists and writers—but *not* film- and videomakers—were granted an exemption from the Uniform Capitalization rules contained in the 1986 Tax Reform Act. Almost up to the final hours of this year's session, House and Senate conferees were deadlocked in their negotiations concerning "technical corrections" to the 1986 law, which included the exemption for freelancers. But shortly before the Senate officially concluded its work, an agreement was reached and the bill was passed in both houses. Although film- and videomakers were excluded from the legislation, they can still take advantage of the partial but significant victory of the Internal Revenue Service rules issued last May in its Notice 88-62 that eliminate the burdensome and costly bookkeeping and accounting requirements of Uniform Capitalization.

Under Uniform Capitalization, artists were told to allocate all expenses to specific projects, forecast the revenue that would be derived from each project, and then wait to deduct the expenses until the project earned money—or until the project was declared worthless for tax purposes. Under the new IRS rules—called "safe harbor"—all expenses can be grouped together as in the past, but only 50 percent can be deducted in the first year, 25 percent in the second, and the remaining 25 percent in the third year. The IRS created this option in response to the successful national artists' lobbying effort led by Artists for Tax Equity (AFTE), of which the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers was a founding member. In April, AFTE had successfully pressed for the introduction of a House bill, sponsored by New York Democrat Thomas Downey, exempting artists, including film- and videomakers. Downey introduced the bill three weeks after meeting with AFTE and AIVF representatives.

When Congress eventually passed the tax bill,

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artists and writers achieved their legislative victory, but film- and videomakers had already lost the battle earlier this fall. In early September, the Senate Finance Committee approved an artists' exemption—cosponsored by Senators Daniel Moynihan of New York and Bill Bradley of New Jersey—but failed to include a provision that Moynihan and Bradley had written that explictly exempted film- and videomakers whose indirect expenses did not exceed $50,000 in a given year. For independent producers, it was déjà vu. In July, the House Ways and Means Committee adopted the Downey bill but also deleted a provision exempting film- and videomakers.

The similar fate of film- and videomakers in both the House and Senate bills reflects the fact that the committees that write tax laws in both the Senate and the House are advised by a Joint Committee on Taxation. While AIVF was able to persuade the sponsors and dozens of cosponsors of the House and Senate of the necessity and fairness of exempting independent producers along with other artists, the committee's permanent staff apparently disagreed and prevailed. Members of the staff interviewed after the Senate defeat noted that, as a tax matter, film and video has always been treated differently from the other arts. They considered it especially significant that, unlike other artists, film- and videomakers have always had to capitalize their direct production costs. In the final analysis, Congress decided to continue to treat low-budget film- and videomakers as manufacturers, rather than as artists.

Why such resistence to treating independent producers like other artists? This may be partly based on history and partly on ignorance. Film production has a notorious history as a tax shelter. In 1976 the tax laws were amended specifically to eliminate the most egregious uses of film production as a tax scam. More than a decade later, Congress seems to retain this bias against filmmaking when it comes to taxes. During the nine-month lobbying effort, Congressional staffers repeatedly insisted that an exemption be as narrowly drawn as possible so that larger producers could not benefit. Their principal concern seemed to be excluding Steven Spielberg from any relief measures fashioned for independent producers.

Furthermore, few members of Congress understand or appreciate film and video as art. To many on Capitol Hill, independent filmmaking is synonymous with horror films and pornography. Despite our best grassroots efforts combined with the hard work done by professional lobbyist Paul Skrabut, we were never able to create the same sympathy for independent producers that Congress mustered on behalf of other artists.

Some film- and videomakers may find it advantageous to follow the Uniform Capitalization rules that will remain in effect. Those who wish to take advantage of the new safe harbor provision must file an amended return by February 25, 1989. [For a more detailed explanation of this method, see "Tax Alert" in the November 1988 issue of *The Independent*.] Since either decision entails long-term consequences, producers should consult with a tax specialist as soon as possible.

AIVF, along with the other representatives of artists' organizations, will certainly revisit this issue under a new administration. For now, however, the IRS' safe harbor appears to be the only port of call for most film- and videomakers.

LAWRENCE SAPADIN

NYSCA CREATES CONTROVERSY OVER MEDIA PROGRAM

At a meeting with representatives of film and video organizations on October 20, the New York State Council on the Arts announced its intention to combine its Film and Media Programs under a single director beginning in March 1989. On September 26, Mary Hays, executive director of NYSCA, sent a memorandum to the Council staff informing them of her plan to merge the Film and Media Programs. "For many reasons, including the extraordinary cuts we have to absorb as a State agency and what the Council and I perceive as logical developments in the field, the Film and Media Programs will be combined beginning March 1, 1989. That program will have Ruby Rich as its Director and will combine the staffs of the two programs. I've asked both program staffs to work out the logistics of guidelines and reviews of applicants over the next few months."

The October 20 meeting was the first opportunity film and video constituents had been offerred to meet with Hays to discuss the Council's position. The meeting had been called at the request of the Media Alliance, a membership organization of media arts centers, museums, independent video producers and others working with electronic media in New York State. Media Alliance representatives asked NYSCA to declare a moratorium on the merger and convene a deliberative body to review the decision. The Council's representatives—Hays, deputy director Barbara Haspiel, chairperson Kitty Carlisle Hart, and Council member Elizabeth Chapin—declined to postpone implementation. However, it became apparent at this meeting that the fate of the two programs had changed when the Council explicitly denied that a "merger" was to take place. Rather, as Hays stated, there would be "one director, two programs." The staffs would remain separate—not "combined," as indicated in the memo—and, most importantly, there would remain two separate panels for the funding of film and video/audio organizations and productions.

Unlike most state arts councils, NYSCA maintains a program specifically for electronically generated arts, established in 1970, which it labelled the Media Program. NYSCA was the first state arts council to recognize video as a distinct art form warranting its own program with a separate director, staff, and panel. Many video producers credit NYSCA—and the Media Program's automony from Film—as being a significant fac-

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tor in video's flourishing in New York State through the 1970s and 1980s.

Despite NYSCA's official silence prior to the meeting on October 20, word about the planned merger spread very quickly. The prospect of losing the Media Program as a separate entity—a major shift within a major funding institution—elicited an immediate response not only from film and video constituents, but also from the current panel of NYSCA's Media Program. In a letter to Hart and the Council members, they stated, "This abrupt and uninformed decision makes a travesty of the entire (long-range) planning process. Certainly a merger of this magnitude should be considered as part of this process, rather than as a budgetary concern. This action also creates an alarming perception that NYSCA's use of taxpayer's money is subject to the arbitrary and capricious budget manipulations of its administration. Furthermore the way in which the decision has been made suggests that any NYSCA constitutency is expendable."

A letter-writing response was also organized by the Media Alliance. In its own letter to the Council they wrote, "We are dismayed that this action was taken without consideration of the implications and repercussions of such a major shift in policy; without a specific plan for implementing it; without communication to the media and film constituency; and without adequate discussion at the staff or council level—all at a time when NYSCA is ostensibly undergong a long-range planning process."

The Council plans to rely on a special task force to work out the logistical details. The task force is supposed to be composed of members of the film and media panels and, as a result of the October 20 meeting, some additional individuals in the field. However, according to Jan-Christopher Horak, chair of the Film Program panel, the Council had not formally notified them of the change even by October 20, let alone invited them to participate in the task force, which is scheduled to meet on November 10 and 14.

The timing of this task force and tardiness of the Council's request for input from panelists and members of the field was the cause of much anger and disgruntlement among many film and video constituents. "The Media Program's panelists weren't consulted about this decision," argued Lucinda Furlong, who sits on that panel. "The role of the panelists is to review applications and make policy recommendations. We should have been consulted." Panelists were first informed of the planned change and the task force during their regularly scheduled meeting on September 30. The subject did not come up when they met with NYSCA's director of long-range planning, Juliana Sciolla, last July. Nor was the Film Program panel notified of the pending change when they convened on September 22, Horak recalls.

From the beginning, Hays has justified the plan on budgetary and administrative grounds, and played down policy implications. Early in the fiscal year NYSCA's budget was vulnerable be-

cause of a $900-million shortfall in New York State tax revenues resulting from changes in federal tax law. A $7-million increase in NYSCA's budget, which the state legislature had originally approved, was withdrawn in the early summer once this shortfall became apparent, and a hiring freeze was imposed. According to Hays the Council's administrative budget was to be slashed by $135,000. "I had to find some money without having to fire anybody," Hays explained in an October 12 interview with *The Independent*. There was a vacancy in the director's spot in the Media Program, since Dai Sil Kim-Gilson had left that position in February 1988. Although the position had been advertised, and the acting director of the Media Program, Arthur Tsuchiya, had applied, Hays said she decided to save $50,000 in salary by not replacing Kim-Gibson. She added, "It would have been administratively senseless to hire someone when the two programs are going to merge."

Hays indicated that the idea for joining the Film and Media Programs had previously circulated within the Council. However, both Hays and Hart said that the merger could just as easily have been of Literature and Theater, or another such combination, if one of their program directors had left at this juncture. But it is clear that the Council administration believes the Film/Media combination to be a good idea which would have been instituted sooner or later. When Council member Elizabeth Chapin said at the October 20 meeting that the position of Media Program director could be restored if the state legislature would increase its allocations to NYSCA in the future, Hays contradicted her, refusing to make such a commitment.

Whether the letters from the field had any bearing on the Council's shift from proposing a merger to a "one director, two programs" structure is unknown. But there are more immediate questions, assuming this latest plan will be carried out. If there will be no structural changes in both programs beyond the elimination of the Media Program director's position, the task force's mandate to draw up a plan of implementation becomes somewhat moot. There is also the question of whether a single director will be able to absorb the double workload. As it now stands, both the Film and Media Programs can barely accommodate their current requests and reviews, and applications to the Media Program were up 20 percent last year. It is likely that the program director would be forced to spend less time communicating with the field and spend more time on purely administrative tasks. These and other points now await answers from the Council.

QUYNH THAI AND PATRICIA THOMSON

PBS PROGRAM HEAD LEAVES FOR SUNDANCE

Suzanne Weil, PBS's senior vice president of programming for the past eight years, left her post in early October to become executive director of the Sundance Institute. Weil, who will continue on at PBS as a consultant until the end of the year, had been there for 10 years, first coming aboard as the director of arts and humanities programming in 1978, then promoted to her position as programming head in 1980. As of late October, PBS had not named a replacement.

Weil will be moving to Sundance's headquarters in Provo, Utah, located about an hour outside Salt Lake City. Sundance was established by Robert Redford in 1980 as a resource center to cultivate the skills of independent producers, directors, and writers. Sundance hosts month-long labs for filmmakers and screenwriters, plus newer laboratories for film composers and playwrights, a children's theater, a program for dance in film and video, and the United States Film Festival. Weil will officially assume the position of executive director on February 1, replacing Thomas Wilhite, who first joined Sundance two years ago. Wilhite, who has his own production company, is stepping down in order to pursue several of his own film projects. However, he will remain general director of Sundance's Children's Theatre and will continue to coordinate the public events within the film composers program.

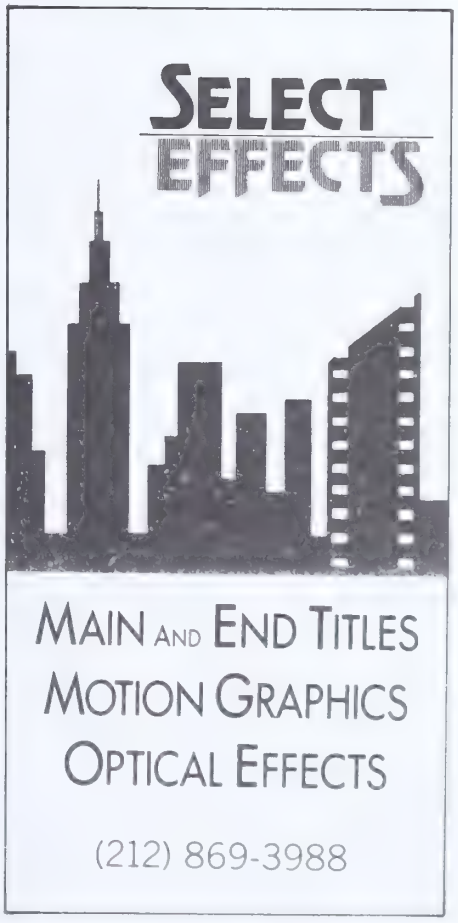
Weil will oversee administration of Sundance's current programs and help establish and implement long-range plans. "I have no intention of making any radical changes at the beginning," she says. "I think it works very well there. There's nothing broken, nothing to be fixed." In terms of the more distant future, Weil envisions adding television to Sundance's programs, provided she can raise the money. Weil is relectant to elaborate on just what this might be prior to spending time at Sundance and finding out "where Sundance might fit into the needs of television." She adds, "It might be exploring high definition television, where the relationship of film and television already exists, experimental work, or bringing film people to television or television people to film." Weil intends to "spend time and talk to smart people" at Sundance, the U.S. Film Festival, and elsewhere for their input on what direction such a program might take.

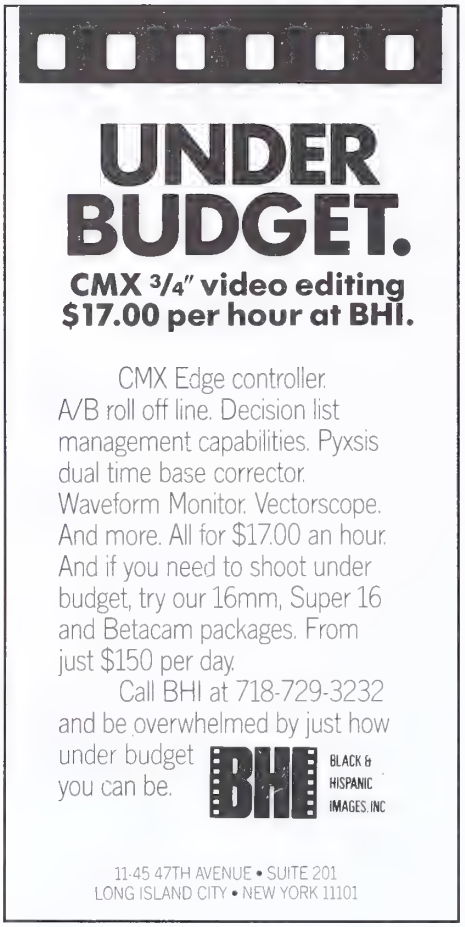
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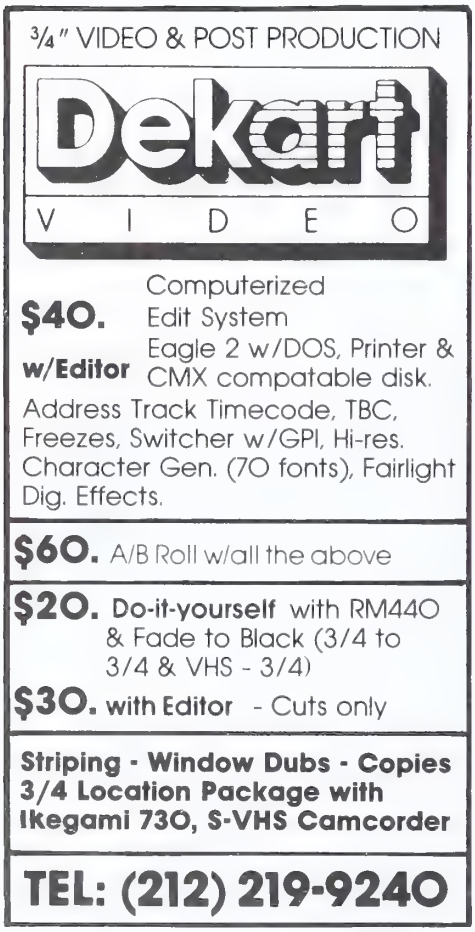
WEBB WALKS AFTER RIFT WITH SYDNEY FEST

Rod Webb, the director of the Sydney Film Festival, has resigned from his post in the wake of a bitter rift with the festival's board of directors, a move which has divided both the board and Australia's film community. The long-standing disagreements between Webb and the board stemmed from problems with communication, management authority, staff treatment, and policies which Webb described as "idiosyncratic" leading to an "intolerable" working situation. Shortly after his resignation, an extraordinary board meeting was called, organized shortly after receiving a petition signed by 25 festival members calling for an explanation of the









dispute and the possible resignation of the board.

The two week-long festival, which celebrated its thirty-fifth season last June, is one of the foremost film events in Australia and had been under Webb's notable leadership for the last five years. He travelled to most major international film festivals shopping for entries, and each year's programming bore his unique imprint and sense of new cinematic trends. Webb also worked closely with U.S. independent filmmakers. Every winter he visited New York City in order to select a substantial number of films of all kinds for the Sydney program. He examined new films with both a practised critical eye and a sense of humor, and he often programmed difficult, "offbeat" work with controversial social and political themes. As a result, Sydney has become one of the foreign festivals most receptive to U.S. independent filmmaking. A few of the U.S. films invited to the most recent festival were *Serving Two Masters*, by Edward Tim Lewis; Ken Ausubel's *Hoxsey: Quacks Who Cure Cancer?*; *Lotus*, by Arthur Dong; *Faces of the Enemy*, by Mark Page; and Jennifer Fox's *Beirut: The Last Home Movie*. In addition, he began to include more Asian cinema in the event and continued with the representation of work from almost every continent. Over 150 films were screened last year before Australian audiences, critics, distributors, and buyers.

The Sydney Film Festival is attended each year by a loyal group of hundreds of subscribers, whose dues, along with admissions, almost cover festival costs. Many selections have already been made and invitations accepted for next year's festival, so the 1989 edition will reflect Webb's taste. Hopefully, the Sydney Film Festival audiences will continue to enjoy the eclectic programming developed during his tenure.

KATHRYN BOWSER

KATHLEEN COLLINS, 1942-1988

On September 18, Kathleen Collins Prettyman—poet, teacher, writer, mother, filmmaker, playwright, scholar, and lyricist—crossed another boundary. A vibrant and intelligent woman, Kathleen left a legacy of films and creative and intellectual writing that testifies to her independent, pioneering spirit.

A philosophy and religious studies major in college, Kathleen became interested in film criticism while frequenting the Cinémathèque Française during an extended vacation in France. She returned to the States during the "blaxploitation" period in the early seventies and worked as an assistant editor to John Carter on *Cotton Comes to Harlem*. She later edited St. Clair Bourne's first film, *Let the Church Say Amen*, and worked on *The 51st State* and *Black Journal* at NET, the public TV production center in New York City. While at NET she taught editing and met her close friend and collaborator Ronald Gray. In 1973 she was hired by City College, where she taught film history and aesthetics for 15 years.

Her first film, *The Cruz Brothers and Mrs. Malloy*, resulted from Gray's challenge that she should break free from the security of academia and make her own films. In 1979 Kathleen began shooting *Cruz Brothers* with $7,000 and volunteers who were City College students and members of her family. Gray served as cinematographer and eventually became coproducer. The film was shot in 14 days and cut in two months. It is a comedy featuring two Latino men and a white woman, which some thought wasn't "ethnic" or "political" enough. Programmers didn't know how to classify a film made by two black filmmakers that didn't directly address "the black experience."

Heedless of such criticism, Kathleen and Gray decided to make a feature with a full, paid crew and a much larger budget. *Losing Ground* was initiated with funds from the American Film Institute and the National Endowment for the Arts, but production shut down within a week when other promised funds never materialized. Before the film was in the can, the crew shrank from 22 to three. They finished shooting, however, and edited the film in Kathleen's living room.

Losing Ground tells the story of a middle-class, black woman's struggle to find herself within her marriage and features actors Bill Gunn and Seret Scott. It was one of the few films to be screened to a full house in the history of the Museum of Modern Art's Cineprobe series. But, again, the film was deemed too personal and thus politically irrelevant. In all her work, Kathleen refused to depict blacks within the traditional role of heroic or stoic victim who is confined to reacting to racism. She was harshly criticized for choosing to portray the experience of blacks within the context of an artistic and intellectual middle class. Sadly, *Losing Ground* has never been theatrically released.

After finishing *Losing Ground*, Kathleen became discouraged by the lack of support for her film projects and began to shift towards writing for the theater. Two of her plays, *The Brothers* and *In the Midnight Hour*, were produced off-Broadway, but she never abandoned filmmaking. At the time of her death, she and Grey were working on a new project.

As black male independent filmmakers continue to attain international recognition for their feature films, black women are also stretching out into feature production. As one of the first black women to explore that coveted territory, Kathleen will be deeply missed.

DARESHA KYI

Daresha Kyi is an independent filmmaker living and working in New York City.

FONS IANELLI, 1917-1988

Fons Ianelli, the inventor of what was later called "cinema verite," died on August 26 at the age of 71. Best known as a still photographer, Ianelli

photographed in the Pacific for the Navy during World War II. Later he worked as a freelance photojournalist for *McCalls*, *Life*, *Fortune*, *Collier's*, and the *Saturday Evening Post*.

In 1951 or 1952, using one of the first—maybe *the* first—Nagra to arrive in the U.S. and linking it to a camera (Auricon) capable of filming in sync, he spent two nights documenting the activity in the emergency ward of St. Vincent's Hospital in New York City. The footage was extraordinary, but, not being an editor, Ianelli didn't know how to structure it or how to interweave the simultaneous events. He called in Leo Hurwitz to help.

Hurwitz had been the founder and director of the CBS Television News department and had left that post to make his own films. At the time he was approached by Ianelli he was directing films for the United Nations. He was also listed in *Red Channels*, blacklisting him—this was during the McCarthy period—and precluding any return to CBS. From Ianelli's scattered material Hurwitz was able to fashion an affecting short film, which they called *Emergency Ward*. It landed them a contract for six more sync-sound reality documentaries with *Omnibus*, the prestigious CBS Sunday afternoon program.

The first of these films was to be about an up-and-coming boxer: his family, his parents (foster), his managers, his fights. Ianelli did camera and lighting, Hurwitz was the director—by phone. Because he was blacklisted he was not allowed on the set, which in this case was the apartment or gym or playground where the shooting took place. Ianelli would call Hurwitz, describe the moment, and receive directions.

The heavy camera was moved about, then stabilized by means of a unipod. The film stock of the day, Plus-X reversal, was relatively slow. To add an additional stop without adding more lights, the film was latensified—the latent image was fogged so that the film reacted to the first hint of light. This was done by running unexposed 100' rolls over the pilot light of a Bell and Howell projector, using the arms and rewind mechanism. To avoid static during the operation, the projector was placed on a table whose legs were immersed in the warm water of a bathtub. The humidity prevented electrical buildup.

The Young Fighter was ready for airing in 1953, and it has lost nothing over time. The team's second film was to be about the Lexington School for the Deaf. Midway through the production, Ianelli and Hurwitz had a falling out. Subsequently, Ianelli revealed to CBS that the director of *The Young Fighter* and the current production was on *Red Channels*' blacklist. CBS thereupon insisted that Hurwitz be removed from the film. Other editors were employed to finish *Deaf Boy*, but the contract was severed, the four remaining films were not made, and as far as I know, Fons Ianelli's film career ended.

MANNY KIRCHHEIMER

Manny Kirchheimer is a former board member of AIVF and an independent filmmaker whose most recent film is We Were So Beloved.

SEQUELS

Prior to passage of a reauthorization bill for public broadcasting, President Reagan signed into law **$242,060,000 appropriation** for public broadcasting in 1991. An additional $56,810,000 was budgeted to pay for satellite replacement. In September, the Senate Commerce Committee confirmed the appointment of **Leslee "Honey" Alexander** to the CPB board of directors. One vacant seat remains on the board. At their meeting in late September, the CPB board reelected **Howard Gutin** as chair.

□ □ □

Barbara Scharres has been promoted to director of the Film Center at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She replaces Richard Peña, who was hired as the program director of the Film Society of Lincoln Center ["Changing of the Guard at the New York Film Festival," "Media Clips," April 1988]. **Don Drucker**, a program officer for the Media Arts Program of the National Endowment for the Arts, resigned last July. To date, his replacement has not been named.

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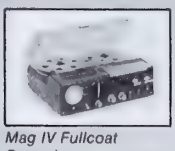
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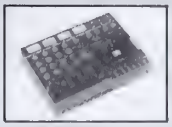
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BLACK FILMMAKING IN THE 1990S: A PIONEERING EVENT

John Williams

[Editor's note: With this issue we are introducing an occasional column called "Flashback" that will highlight the work of individuals and institutions that has influenced independent media in the U.S. We welcome suggestions of suitable subjects for future columns.]

□ □ □

In an interview in the now defunct black film journal *Chamba Notes* (Spring 1979), veteran black independent filmmaker William Greaves quelled all doubts about the lack of opportunities available to the newest generation of black independents in contrast to those who preceded them. "I feel depressed at how little work there is for black filmmakers," he declared, "but I am also aware that when I first started in 1950, *there were none!!* William Alexander was the only black filmmaker I knew. And that was it!! I am delighted that the situation is so much better today than it was then. But my delight can only be seen in relative terms. In objective terms, the situation is terrible."

In response to the different sets of circumstances that separated the experiences of the new crop of black independents of the eighties from their predecessors in the seventies, the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame in Oakland organized a three-day intensive independent film workshop in August 1984. Open to all black independent film- or videomakers who had completed at least one project, the theme for the workshop was "Black Filmmaking in the 1990s: Strategies for Survival in the 21st Century." Subsequent workshops were held in 1985 and 1986. Coordinator Brenda Grayson explains that the workshops "began as a new thrust towards more services and programs aimed at developing the skills of black filmmakers and encouraging networking among professionals in the film industry."

The initial gathering in 1984 provided opportunities for over 40 independent film- and videomakers from across the country to meet with film professionals for three days of intensive dialogue, discussion, and film screenings, and to receive instruction from independent directors Gordon Parks Sr. and William Greaves, scenarist Lonne Elder III, producer Topper Carew, and editor Hugh Robertson. Participants—selected by a panel of BFHF members and the workshop's directors on the basis of their previous work as well as their intentions—explored aspects of filmmaking as diverse as project development, scriptwriting, black cinema aesthetics, film editing, producing and distributing documentary films, and directing independent features, as well as marketing, advertising, and producing for syndicated television. Likewise, the participants' experience ran the gamut from documentary, narrative, and experimental film to music videos and public service announcements.



Topper Carew (left) talks with William Greaves at the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame's Workshop for Independent Filmmakers in 1984.

Photo: Jacob Blanchette

In *Black Cinema Aesthetics*, film critic Gladstone Yearwood delineates the characteristics of the new black cinema: "Instead of viewing low-budgets as liabilities, it develops an ambience shorn of the illusory glitter of traditional cinema.... It deals with explicit political themes, but contains a commitment to the cultural struggles of black and other oppressed people.... It holds a commitment to advancing the rights of black people, but never hesitates to speak to a larger audience.... It uses white Hollywood cinema as a means of changing prevalent representations of blacks, but is concerned with establishing a viable black independent cinema."

Within this cultural matrix, the BFHF film workshops continued a dialogue that began with the first festival for black independent cinema in New York City in 1970 and continued at events like the Festival of Three Continents Black Cinema Series in 1979, the Black Filmmaker Foundation's 1979 Dialogues with Black Filmmakers series, the Paris Retrospective of Black Independent Cinema in 1980, the 1984 UCLA Black Independent Film Festival, and the Journey Across Three Continents Film/Lecture Series, organized by Third World Newsreel in 1985.

The Hall of Fame workshops, however, were a once-in-a-lifetime occasion. Some of the 40 young and energetic independents practically sold the clothes off their backs to pay the cost of a round-trip flight to Oakland (although BFHF provided a few travel grants). In light of the $50 bargain basement fee for the workshop, this was a small sacrifice. Hoping to glean inspiration for their future careers, they came from every major city in the country.

The workshop opened with Gordon Parks Sr.'s "Directing the Independent Feature Film" seminar. A filmmaker, photographer, novelist and composer, the 75-year-old director maintains the distinction of being the first black independent to direct a feature film at a major Hollywood studio, *The Learning Tree* made for Warner Brothers in 1968, and subsequently directed a number of feature films, including *Shaft* and *Leadbelly*, the documentaries *Diary of a Harlem Family* and *Moments without Proper Names*, and the network television program *Positively Black*.

When Parks arrived to conduct his seminar, he was enthusiastically welcomed. A clockwork rapport between the teacher and his pupils occurred as they bombarded him with questions about his rise to success. Segun Oyekunle, an L.A.-based independent filmmaker from Nigeria who directed the incisive *Parcel Post*, asked Parks how *The Learning Tree* became the first feature to

be directed by a black man on a Hollywood lot. "When the white world embraced me and made me the first black director," Parks recounted with a wry sense of humor, "newspaper reporters came from all over the country to at last proclaim that they had a 'black director.' But it took one man to say that there was going to be a black director in Hollywood. If Kenny Hyman had not wanted me, there would probably be no black directors today."

Although Parks wrote, produced, and composed the musical score for *The Learning Tree*, it was his second production which secured his place in film history—*Shaft*.. Produced in 1971 on a budget of $1.2-million, it became one of the top box-office successes of the year. Even though Parks' success was underscored by an avalanche of angry debate condemning the film as "blaxploitation," it did create more opportunities for black independents seeking to work in the commercial industry. New York filmmaker Ayoka Chenzira posed the final question addressed to Parks in the seminar, asking Parks what advice he had to impart to the new generation of black independents. "If the black director isn't careful," he warned, "he's going to be wiped out. The white sources know that a lot of money can be made from black films. As a matter of fact, white directors are taking over some of the things that black directors should be doing. So, they should forget the fact that they're *black* so that they can do *any* film they want. They must refuse to allow their talents to be ghettoized by doing *everything* in the field there is. I tell my agents, don't just bring me black films. Bring me *Ryan's Daughter* or *The Exorcist*. Let me refuse or take it. Because after a while, there's going to be a limit to what you can do out there."

No one incarnates the spirit of the black film movement of the seventies more than William Greaves. An actor/producer/director, Greaves has worked on over 300 films, many of them award-winners that have netted him international acclaim. He was the executive producer of the first black network show on American public television, *Black Journal* which was produced at NET, the New York City public TV station, from 1968 to 1971. Since then, he has been instrumental in fostering the careers of independents such as St. Clair Bourne, Stan Lathan, and Stanley Nelson.

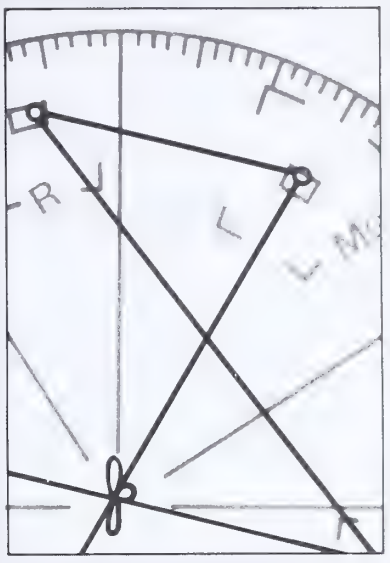
Cited by film historian Thomas Cripps in *Black Film as Genre* for his production of the archetypal black documentary *From These Roots*, Greaves is eloquent, outspoken, and debonair. Greaves taught the "Producing, Directing, and Distributing the Documentary Film" seminar at the workshop.

When independent film/videomaker Michelle Parkerson asked Greaves what prompted his entrée into the arena of independent film by , he explained the catalyst of his career: "As a young black actor, the Uncle Tom parts I was asked to play revolted me, and I invariably turned them down. I was assaulted by images of black people on white screens that were not only unacceptable,

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but insulting. I saw the games being played with the careers of black actors like Paul Robeson, Canada Lee, and Gordon Heath and decided to get behind the camera where I could control what appeared on the screen."

A prolific documentary producer, Greaves grew up in the racially hostile climate of Harlem during the McCarthy era of the fifties. Like film director Melvin Van Peebles, who left the country in order to hone his filmmaking skills in France, Greaves spent a number of years working at the National Film Board in Canada. Greaves also studied film production with Hans Richter at the City College of New York and was a student of pioneer documentarian Louis de Rochemont.

Another workshop participant, author/filmmaker Ishmael Reed, raised the proverbial issue facing every black independent seeking to secure funding for their projects. In answer to Reed's question about the notion of the black independent's adoption of the documentary-public affairs format as a survival strategy, Greaves responded, "When I was studying with Hans Richter, a young man came over to my house. We talked about our aspiration to become film directors. I had been assured that the path to become a documentary film producer was the right one. He, on the other hand, seemed anxious to get on with the business of making features. His name was Stanley Kubrick." Greaves continued, "My choice of the documentary as opposed to the feature film can be explained by the fact that I am more interested in documentaries. But this is a rationalization. The simple fact was that Kubrick was white and I was black. The motion picture field is one of the most fiercely competitive enterprises. The talented Kubrick could take a gamble and hope to succeed. I couldn't."

When scenarist Lonne Elder III appeared to teach his "Scriptwriting for the Independent Feature Film" session, there was electricity in the air. Carrying bound copies of the television script from his award-winning play *Ceremonies in Dark Old Men* under one arm and the screenplay from his feature film *Sounder* under the other, Elder's students rushed to assist their professor-to-be. Elder was born in Americus, Georgia, but spent most of his early life in Jersey City and Harlem. Elder revealed, "When I was 19 or 20, Douglass Turner Ward and I were sharing an apartment. He had written a gigantic play—the longest I'd ever seen. The most I'd ever written was a 15-page short story or a one-page poem, and he was one of my peers. If he wrote this whole thing, I thought, well, I could do that too."

In 1969, Elder achieved fame with the success of *Ceremonies in Dark Old Men*, which received the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award and was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. However, it was his screenplay for the film *Sounder*, starring Cicely Tyson and Paul Winfield, that earned him an Academy Award nomination and a place in the annals of film history. When asked by his students to discuss some of the primary themes in his work,



Black Filmmaking in the 1990s workshop instructors (from left to right): Gordon Parks Sr., Hugh Robertson, and Lonne Elder III.

Photo: Jacob Blanchette

Elder answered, "Basically, I'm trying to deal with black people in the fullest sense by trying to illustrate all the ways we've historically survived in the face of a physical and psychological brutality which completely denies survival or sanity for that matter."

The workshop again buzzed with anticipation when syndicated television wizard Topper Carew appeared to conduct the session "Marketing, Advertising, and Producing for Syndicated Television." An architect-turned-filmmaker, Carew has received over 60 awards for his achievements. Boston-born and Yale-educated, the 44-year-old television entrepreneur spent five years writing and producing public television programs at WGBH in Boston. Since 1973, Carew has produced more than 40 documentaries, television specials, and independent features for network and syndicated television. Recently, he made history when his primetime sitcom *Bustin' Loose* topped the charts of first-run syndicated TV shows.

L.A.-based filmmaker Alile Sharon Larkin asked Carew about his decision to enter the realm of independent media production. Carew replied, "I spent four months registering blacks to vote in Mississippi during the Civil Rights Movement in the sixties. It was traumatic, but it was a crossroad. I came back changed, and I began to see how I could apply my intelligence and whatever skills I had to make American society more equitable."

Exhausted from the weekend's jam-packed schedule of events, the student-participants ended the workshop with the screening of Parks' *Shaft* and Hugh Robertson's *Melinda*. Robertson's session entitled "Editing the Independent Feature Film" closed the workshop. Born in Brooklyn of parents from Jamaica, Hugh Robertson catapulted into the limelight in 1969 when John Schlesinger hired him to edit *Midnight Cowboy*. For his efforts, he was nominated for both an Academy Award and a British Oscar. Robertson was also one of the first black-Americans to gain admission to the racially exclusive IATSE Motion Picture Editors Local 771 Union in New York City. But as directing had always been his ambition, he actively sought opportunities to fulfill this desire, and he made his directorial debut in 1972 with *Melinda*, for which Elder wrote the screenplay.

A milestone in the history of black independent film culture in the U.S., BFHF's workshops resulted in bringing together disparate sectors of the black film community to discuss, identify, and evaluate filmmaking practices critical for survival in the twenty-first century. One 1984 participant, New Jersey-based independent Linda Gibson declared, "It gave me insight and the inspiration to continue my film work. Just learning how many of us are out there and meeting with others with similar experience let me know that it's tough, but not impossible, to have a career behind the camera. The workshop directors working with us were not really teaching, but giving us experience."

By offering a forum allowing those from the West Coast to enter into dialogue with those from the East, the rookie with the veteran, it provided a range of strategies for those who regard cinema as a site of cultural struggle against the racist and sexist assumptions of Euro-American media and popular culture. As Velfrancis Dillard, a recent graduate of the UCLA master's program in film succinctly put it, "All filmmakers don't look like Steven Spielberg or George Lucas."

John Williams, a scholar of independent filmmaking, is a contributor to A Critique of America, Discourse, *and other publications.*

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Beauty, Flesh, and the Empire of Absence

RESIGHTING WARHOL



Baby Jane Holzer and Gerard Malanga in *Kiss* (1963)

Courtesy of the Estate of Andy Warhol

Paul Arthur

"There are two kinds of people in the world," Andy Warhol might have said, "those who see my movies as (im)practical jokes, japes of a childishly narcissistic order, and those who regard them as epistemological conundrums, jokes capable of undermining (or sustaining) entire systems of social belief." Like most things of this sort that Warhol said, or didn't say, neither choice is particularly tenable in a realm of shifting appearances and signification. Decidability, like presence, is a matter of time—say, 15 minutes—and historical context. And less can be more and also something else. In this Year of Warhol, in the posthumous apotheosis of his project, "the Warhol Phenomenon," through auctions, rumors, books, newspaper supplements, and a film retrospective half-delivered and half-promised, the prospect of settling in with a group of precious objects—even, or especially, if their objecthood is as ephemeral as patterns of light—was like finding safe haven in the midst of a storm: a big blow whose winds were threatening to not only relocate specific classes of things in the cultural landscape but uproot its terms altogether.

This haven was precisely what the shrewdly titled series "The Films of Andy Warhol: An Introduction," screened at the Whitney Museum last spring, proffered to film scholar and culture maven alike. No high-powered buying and selling, no warring authors, no complicated networks of class and privilege. Just a museological revival, cosponsored by the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Museum of Modern Art under the respective guidance of John Hanhardt and Jon Gartenberg, of a crucial cinematic moment long suppressed from public view. But, as with all enterprises by and about the pale master, strident ironies emerged to swamp the comfortable repose of pure vision, twisting meaning in ways unanticipated by its sponsors and probably unwanted. Despite the slippage, it was the greatest spectacle to play New York in several years.

Ironies began to accumulate, as it were, at the museum's doors. Of all the venues exploited for Warhol films—from battered Factory couches to Cinematheque basements to multi-media strewn walls of discos to art houses and schlock houses—the Whitney's sepulchral screening room is undoubtedly the least conducive to the intricate richness of the work (to cite one distortion, the experience of notebook-kneed students "shushing" the crowd during the silence of *Kiss* might have been hilarious were it not so grim.) Showings went off like clockwork, the image was always legible, and sound was as clear as it is likely to get, every contributor duly named and credited. *C'est dommage*. As one who saw some of the films in some of their original haunts, it is possible to decry the absence of all the ancillary commotion and confusion that surrounded past screenings, interacting with and at times duplicating the diegetic action, while recognizing the absurdity of wanting a trace of galvanizing "aura."

Objections of this nature are telling, if useless. In his brief catalogue essay Hanhardt is quick to acknowledge the displacement of viewing contexts and to suggest the inflecting, and reciprocal, functions wrought by aesthetic and social renovations in film consumption during the sixties. For Warhol, the two central gestures of his formal approach—which happen to constitute two of the central ontological acts of cinema—are framing and structuring of time. And despite the retraction of local interference in the theater it was still feasible for the Whitney audience to enter the thick mesh of transactions between what is framed (on-screen) and what is unframed (off-screen), at least in the space of imagination.

Time, however, presents a different obstacle. There were, and I suspect continue to be, nearly insurmountable difficulties in the preservation of this oeuvre: films lost and in states of dismemberment; footage left undeveloped



***Blow Job* (1963)**

Courtesy of the Anthology Film Archive

BELOW:



***Empire* (1964)**

Courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive

or unmarked by date, title, or anything else; reels reported as shown in varied sequences or reincorporated into separate larger works. In keeping with Warhol's obvious reinvention of film history from the ground up, the curators must have felt like they were researching production at the turn of the century. The masking and dispersion of the total "body" is, of course, part and parcel of the profligacy that simultaneously constituted Warhol's transgressive discourse and his personal indifference. Because of implied restrictions on the scope of the retrospective and constraints of the museum situation, several important films were shown only in excerpts while others, such as *Kiss*, seem to have jettisoned sequences remembered from past screenings. Among other peculiarities, this led to an inversion in which spectators sat raptly watching 42 minutes of an six-hour film that few, if any, would have watched for 40 minutes straight in its original form.

As Stephen Koch has astutely claimed, Warhol was the first filmmaker in the history of the medium for whom an audience's "disinterest" in the work—its summary or intermittent refusal to sit still for it—became an active term in its production of meaning.* To be deprived of this outrageous temporal scaffolding, to elide the confrontation of interminable image with the viewer's "real life" frustrations and desires, turned into a denial of a founding moment in a global strategy of self-doubt and abnegation. Destabilizing even the common notion of what it is to "see" a movie, the epic-length works carved a new facet in the phenomenology of "living in quotes." Issues of voyeurism and exhibitionism aside, a consistent implication in Warhol's films is the bleeding or displacement of the dramatic from projected image to the conditions of viewing. Trimming some of the early films into bite-sized pieces served to tame them, draining their power not only as individual experiences but as stages in a coherent program of historical development.

This program, the sense of how films follow one another in capitalizing upon prior accidents or necessary inventions, is one of the surprising rewards of the series and should be even more cogent in the full retrospective unveiling planned by the Whitney in the early 1990s. The complex narrative of Warhol's career—marked by transitions such as silent to sound, unscripted to scripted, artisanal to industrial production, cinematographer to director to producer—only confirms the degree to which all aspects of time, or more precisely duration, are converted into narrative unfolding. That even the early films could have been read as static, nondramatic, seems at this juncture almost willfully dogmatic, a product of an invidious modernist critical agenda. The outlines of narrative incident may surface in odd ways or at odd places in the text but still it is the bedrock of Warhol's manipulations of time and presence. Unlike the more rarified efforts of the Structural filmmakers following in his wake, Warhol never drifts from the space of sociality (there are no solitary landscapes or "non-signifying" abstractions of place). The motley collection of superstars has always preceded the camera in the space of the image, although what they do there is completely determined by the camera's running stare.

The playwright Ronald Tavel, Warhol's early "scenarist," has said that in a uniquely lucid directive he was asked to compose "not plot but incident." Thus the forms of narrative that permeate the films are distinctly not of a classical, well-turned nature but evolve in an oscillating field of role-playing and its dramatized breakdown; actors confront the characters fashioned for or by them in a calculus of self-definition, or they interact with (often unseen) agencies of control and provocation. For the filmmaker, this could be reduced to what he called "letting people be themselves and talk about what they usually talked about." But for the spectator anxious to ascribe not just categories of presentation—pre-scribed, improvised, uncontrolled psychodrama—but *causes*, this process means a forced engagement with conditions of film production collapsed onto a more or less fictive set of events.

People already attached to a profilmic "scene" are given a simple prop (e.g., a mushroom) or pretext (e.g., try to kiss for three minutes) and then willingly negotiate a character and activity within the latitude of the recording process. It is not necessarily that what occurs on screen mirrors circumstances by which it has come into being—although it may—but that a dynamic and semi-legible relationship is present between the image surface and a context one is at pains to infer. Part of this context is technical—as in how a film was done—and part is social, the figuring of a matrix that includes subcultural codes of behavior and hierarchies but also conventions of Hollywood fiction and its ideological supports. The result is, at best, a massive disruption of fixed categories of apperception. From first

* Among the host of paradoxes attached to this work is that while it has been unseen for many years it has generated considerable critical attention, much of it first-rate. The *locus classicus* is Koch's essential monograph, *Star-Gazer: Andy Warhol's World and His Films* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973). It is a deeply perceptive account of sensibility and psychology, although in need of some revision in light of recent psychoanalytic film theories. David James' materialist reading of Warhol's project, "The Producer as Author," in *Wide Angle*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (1985), to which I am profoundly indebted, forms part of the foundation for his ground-breaking study of sixties film culture, *Allegories of Cinema*, forthcoming from Princeton University Press.



J. MacDermott, Gerard Malanga, and Edie Sedgwick in *Vinyl* (1965)

Courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive

to last, Warhol's work poses insoluble questions normally taken for granted even within the canon of the avant-garde. What is a shot, a sequence, an action, indeed a *movie*? How can we describe the border between fiction and documentary, between narrative and nonnarrative, structure and randomness? Where does authorship reside, and what is its role: in cinematography, direction, acting, writing, the society of the spectacle?

The "drama" in these films is produced through the sounding of such questions, their divergences and intersections. A powerful instance is the infamous, supposedly minimal, eight hours of *Empire* (1964). Aside from its phallic joke, its plays on landscape painting and postcards, its blank hyperrealism, it is the longest establishing shot in the history of movies. Radically attenuating the opening moments of hundreds of Hollywood melodramas (signifying "This is New York"), *Empire* summons up the ghosts of "eight million stories" just beyond the frame of this naked city icon. What a paradox of economy! Not able to make, or not wanting to, the kind of movies that would flow from this initial gambit, Warhol merely provides the backdrop and a stupefied viewer perforce fills in the story, one way or another.

Perhaps the biggest revelation of the series at the Whitney was how what was assumed to be formal, vacuous, mute, came to seem in our narratology-obsessed critical moment intensely energetic, complex, and socially redolent. *Kiss* (1963), the first Warhol film to be publicly screened—in serial form—offers an arbitrarily arranged series of couples necking in close-up for the length of a 100 foot roll. Another joke on film history (Edison's 1896 "first" kiss), each breathless encounter unfolds like a mini-drama and the whole takes on lineaments of a cagily abstracted mini-series. Participants kiss in astonishingly varied phrases and rhythms, and this extended yet truncated action holds all the cues for establishing full-blown characters: this one is annoyingly cool, that one falsely passionate, and so on. Aspects of class, social affiliation, and vocation are read via clothing styles, hair, and manner. There is even a striking plot twist when, after a succession of obviously heterosexual face-offs, a zoom back announces (or, depending on one's acuity, confirms) the fact that the current couple is composed of two men.

Kiss also initiates a theme that is reworked across the span of Warhol's career: the body, not as image but as tactile presence or rather, absence. The cinema is adept at replicating movement, it makes lifelike sounds, can have color, and has posited an arsenal of expressive devices by which to signal states. It has, however, only the most paltry means for conveying a sense of touch. For all the emphasis on Warhol's tropes of envisioning, the "stare" or "gaze" or "consuming look"—amounting to, as P. Adams Sitney contends, the axis of the "visionary"—his work is frequently distinctly physical. All about touch and its origins in the gestalt of an integral body. Yet what is relished is depriving the view of the body compleat, masking or deflecting it by various means, keeping the part of it most foregrounded by the on-screen action out of sight (hence the waist-up framing of *Blow Job* (1963). Doing so, he invokes its palpability in a manner that would be obviated by a full image. His actors wrestle, fuck, slap each other, and generally improvise as much physical contact as verbal insult. A by-product of this play is the spectator's self-conscious experience of his or her *own body* in a relay of optical desire; the image triggering in us a displaced sensation of what is disavowed or impossible. In *Kiss* we ponder what's going on below the frameline just as in other films we invest a determining meaning in what is tantalizingly hidden by the camera's place.

In *Beauty #2* (1965), the associations with subject and object, the terms of looking, speaking, feeling, being looked at, felt, etc., are refracted through a prism of contradictory positions and visual foci. Ostensibly a screen-test portrait of reigning superstar Edie Sedgwick, the film convenes one of the densest exchanges of power and impotency imaginable. Sedgwick, in bra and panties, is posed in a gorgeous composition of lines, shapes, and textures on a crumpled bed. She is joined by minor "beauty" Gino Piserchio stripped to his underpants. The premise is about her slow on-screen seduction choreographed by the off-screen voice of longtime assistant Chuck Wein, aided (and undercut) on occasion by the off-screen Gerard Malanga. A dog named Horse is hugged and teased early on. Edie drinks almost continuously from a huge tumbler perched on a side table. Both never-to-be lovers smoke furiously. Gino fondles Edie's peripheral regions, Edie carries on a running dialogue with the male voices—basically a medly of taunts, dumb existential queries, and reports on Gino's (non)activity—and a running exchange of glances with the camera. That is roughly it, for 66 minutes.

But the sumptuousness of the visual arena and the subtlely tangled lines of (mis)communication set in motion create a dizzying perceptual effect. Gino lounges slightly behind Edie, Chuck is stationed off to her left, and the camera looms at an oblique angle to the bed on her right. She is encircled but never the object of victimization. One position looks but cannot touch and remains silent. Another taunts her verbally but may not be looking at her. A third rubs her body but elicits the least claim on her attention. She crosses her legs, tucks them under her, snuffs a cigarette, adjusts her bra strap, toys with her glass—all the while parrying and returning assaults from every quarter. It is a performance that assays the limits of psychological dispersal without relinquishing an increment of tough-minded control. She is clearly the motivating force in this assembly. Without her there is no



Paul America in *My Hustler* (1965)

Photo: Billy Name/Factory Photo, courtesy of the Estate of Andy Warhol

BELOW:



Louis Waldron and Tom Hompertz in *Lonesome Cowboys* (1967)

Photo: Paul Morrissey, courtesy of the Estate of Andy Warhol

movie, and she plays a skillful game of withholding and exposing herself on several levels at once.

As against the well-known Warhol slogan—"I am a machine"—the central body in *Beauty #2* is at the furthest remove from the mechanical. The split sensory agents who surround Edie finally work to clarify the fullness of her person, mediating a representation of the human that could have been the envy of Italian Neo-Realism (with which Warhol shares some surprising assumptions). To be sure, this proposal scandalizes the whole scandalous thrust of a carefully nurtured publicity: Warhol as humanist indeed. If the tag does not quite fit, 20-odd years of invisibility have helped to heighten documentary aspects of the films. The surfeit of concrete detail—"whole acts in real time," as cinema verite advocates like to put it—is applied not only to the tribal rituals of a bizarre subculture (by now pretty familiar) but to discrete individuals at a certain moment in history possessing great energy and hyperbolic anxieties.

Role-playing, and its documentation, is a matter of time in Warhol's work, wading through the formalities of social interaction and recording process in order to stitch together—or, as often, pull apart—diverse layers of characterization. Even the Empire State Building required a huge uninterrupted stretch to change from transparent index to centripital icon. And duration is seldom a mere device, a provocation for its own sake, but a vehicle through which things become what we as a collective function make them. Instead of the monolithic structure the long-take in Warhol's films is often claimed to be, there are at least three different forms or stages of duration. In one the camera registers a gradual accumulation of something from nothing. A bare setting or "incident" picks up dramatic momentum from the atmosphere of boredom and begins to dictate what can happen next and what protocols will govern its unfolding. This is the case with early films such as *Eat* (1963), *Haircut* (1963), and *Blow Job*.

The second category involves less waiting and less transformation in and through time. Roles have been assigned, there is the skeleton of a fictive regime, and actors work at aligning their scattered impressions into a logical, if not cohesive, mix. *Vinyl* (1965), a loose adaptation of the novel *A Clockwork Orange*, and *The Chelsea Girls* (1966) are the strongest examples shown of time being more or less inhabited by a fictional array of people, objects, and speech. Action and duration embrace as nearly commensurate partners.

In a sense the third category is the most transgressive. After a while the denizens of Warhol's world did not have to search for character in front of the camera; they courted no existential crisis and were as "natural" as any Hollywood pro. They absorbed their parts beforehand. This condition parlayed the worst excesses of campiness and burlesque (e.g., *Lonesome Cowboys*, 1967). But if you could wait long enough, the security of prescribed schtick would fall away and *nothing* would evolve out of *something*. This is the method especially in the "Sunset Beach on Long Island" section of the 25-hour **** (1966): boring horseplay in the sand exhausting itself as the camera refuses to stop, outlasting its diegetic conspirators until they are twisted into new, though hardly "authentic," patterns of response. Thus Ondine fusses, gets irritable and angry in a fashion not limned even by his *Chelsea Girls* incarnation of the "Pope."

Warhol was a master accountant even before he absented himself from the frontlines of film production to become a silent entrepreneur. Among the things he knew was that time was money; that, particularly by today's production standards, running endless rolls of sound film through a camera—waiting for nothing to spontaneously happen—was a wantonly profligate gesture. It was a gesture that could, and occasionally did, pay epistemological dividends. He also knew that time was narrative, that given enough time in front of anything a story would begin to surface. Time carried the seeds of imaginative procreation. In the end, and maybe even in the beginning, Warhol the lifelong fan and addict of the Hollywood system knew that narrative was money, an economy both material and formal, both social and psychological. That this entire enterprise was probably less profitable than the chucks of real estate developed between the edges of stretched canvas does not, except perhaps by his own lights, make him less of a filmmaker.

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Paul Arthur is a filmmaker and currently Rockefeller Scholar in the Humanities at the Whitney Museum of American Art.

The Screenplay's the Thing



From age two to 10, Margaret Mead accompanied her mother, a sociologist, on her field trips. *Margaret Mead: An Observer Observed* shifted from a documentary project to one that included stylized dramatizations after screenwriter Robert Seidman wrote a sample scene of the young Mead going with her mother to study Italian migrant workers in the fields of New Jersey.

Courtesy the Institute for Intercultural Studies, Inc. and the Margaret Mead Project

Patricia Thomson

Groucho Marx once remarked, "Practically everybody in New York has half a mind to write a book—and does." Today it's screenplays. It seems like everyone you talk to either is writing a script or knows someone who is. Last year over 4,600 new scripts, treatments, and story outlines flooded into the Writers Guild of America to be registered. Many more go to film and television studios and producers' offices. Each year Sundance Institute, which sponsors month-long screenwriting workshops, receives 500 or more unsolicited scripts. Sundance's director of East Coast development, Elizabeth Robinson, who looks for new material from agents, people involved in theater, and other contacts, reads between 30 and 40 scripts a month—and she considers this selective reading. In her previous work as a reader for United Artists, Lorimar, and Vestron, the volumn was even greater. "Did you see the cover of *Esquire* magazine several years ago?" she asks. "It's a chimpanzee sitting next to a typewriter with a copy of *Variety* beside him. The text says 'Who in America is *not* writing a screenplay?' Well, that's pretty true. Everyone you bump into wants to write one, or has an idea for one. You get lots of people writing, and they think it's not going to be hard."

But it is harder than one might expect. "Most scripts are dreadful—badly written, with bad structure, bad dialogue, and badly defined characters," says Carla Sarett, who does freelance "coverage" for HBO Showcase (meaning Sarett prepares the report describing what a script is about, the number of characters, location, etc. and writes the critical "log line" that sums up the film in one sentence—e.g., "This movie is about a man who triumphs against all odds"—upon which producers and executives will subsequently make a decision to read a script or not). "Novices have a misconception that there are lots of good scripts floating around," Sarett finds, and "it's a question of discrimination—that they're rejected because they're unknown. The reason they're rejected is because the script is no good. People don't realize how hard it is to write a good script. There's rarely a genius's script lying around waiting to be discovered."

If writing a screenplay is difficult, then having one produced can compound, rather than end, the nightmare. Horror stories about scripts being altered beyond recognition are legion—and have been ever since the film studio system was consolidated in the 1930s, and silent film titlists were replaced by scriptwriters. Innumerable tales of woe sprinkle the pages of



Lou Potter co-wrote the screenplay for Gordon Parks' *Solomon Northup's Odyssey*—based on the true story of a freed black man kidnapped into slavery in 1841—which was broadcast on *American Playhouse*.

Photo: Shep Morgan

Backstory, Pat McGilligan's new book of interviews with screenwriters active during the so-called Golden Age of Hollywood [Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986], which give a fair sense of Hollywood's capricious treatment of the script. Since the end of that era, coinciding with the introduction of television, certain working methods in Hollywood have changed. Film studios no longer have 100 or more writers under contract. Nor do they use an assembly line approach to the screenplay, hiring one writer to pull together a storyline, another to write a first draft, yet others to rewrite, add dialogue, polish, throw in some jokes or sophisticated repartee, place the dance numbers, and so on. (Even film auteurs used this approach. Hitchcock's *Foreign Correspondent*, for instance, employed over 30 writers, most uncredited.) But one thing that hasn't changed is that Hollywood studios are always ready to turn a script on its head for reasons that have nothing to do with improving the story.

Robert Seidman, a novelist and screenwriter, is well-acquainted with "the L.A. experience," as he calls it. He has written several dramatic features, including Amos Poe's *Alphabet City* and the upcoming *Ransom Run*, as well as documentaries for PBS, CBS Cable, and independent producers John Reilly (*Waiting for Beckett*), Julie Gustafson (*Dorothy Day*), and Virginia Yans-McLaughlin (*Margaret Mead: An Observer Observed*), among others. While everyone has their favorite L.A. story, Seidman sums them up this way: "A producer will say, 'We *loved* it. It's the greatest script we've ever read. It was absolutely brilliant. But, you've got to change the girl to a dog.' That's the classic story. Everyone has that happen, and not just once. It happens all the time."

Terrel Seltzer's first experiences with Hollywood fit the pattern. After having cowritten Wayne Wang's *Chan Is Missing* and *Dim Sum*, Seltzer decided to try her hand at more commercial films. Her first script was optioned, but not produced. Her second, which she describes as a sophisticated comedy about college admissions, was accepted by a major studio. The screenplay dealt with both the students and the people who make acceptance decisions—and how the politics, the love affairs, etc., bear on their choices. Shortly after the go-ahead was given, a new studio executive was hired. His kids had just gone through the college entrance ordeal—and he thought a film focusing on the students would be better. So, the script was changed, transformed into a screwball comedy. It is so far removed from what Seltzer had originally written that she cringes at the association and is thinking of having her name removed from the credits. "My agent says if this gets made, I'll be swamped with requests to write *Revenge of the Nerds III*." Such is the price of success in Hollywood, and, as Seltzer points out, "Anyone who comes to Hollywood should expect this."

Despite such stories, people still churn out scripts and set their sights on getting them produced. Whatever the goal, whether it's Hollywood or the art-house film circuit, *American Playhouse* or the educational video market, novice screenwriters have to go through many of the same steps to learn the art and craft. They often have similar misconceptions and are inclined to make the same mistakes. This article therefore offers some pointers and cautionary tales from people who know something about the process—professional readers, scriptwriting teachers, producers, and, of course, writers themselves.

Many of these people speak about the profession's notions concerning the "rules" of screenwriting. While these rules may be consistent within the mainstream entertainment industry, they are by no means universally accepted. Jean-Luc Godard, for instance, made a career ignoring and undermining such conventions. Jean-Marie Straub and Danielle Huillet, Yvonne Rainer, Andy Warhol, Raul Ruiz, Marcel Ophuls, and Alexander Kluge, to name just a few, have variously subordinated narrative story-lines, subplots, three-dimensional characters, or other dramatic devices rooted largely in the nineteenth-century novel form to other concerns. The writers/producers Julie Dash and Karen Ishizuka talk in this article about their alternatives to some of the accepted rules of screenwriting. But because those departing from convention are often most successful when they know what these conventions are, and because many aspiring screenwriters intend to work within traditional narrative forms, this article will discuss screenwriting as it is generally practiced both within the mainstream entertainment industry and by many freelance screenwriters and independent writer/producers.

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Lou Potter takes a breather from his work on *The Exiles* to spend an hour talking about screenwriting. Potter has over 20 years worth of writing and production credits under his belt, from executive editor of NET's *Black Journal* in the late 1960s to writer of numerous recent documentary and dramatic features by such independent producers as St. Clair Bourne, William Greaves, and Stanley Nelson. *The Exiles* is a documentary series he is writing and coproducing with Richard Kaplan in association with WNET on the artists, intellectuals, and scientists who fled to the United States from Hitler's Europe. "One really terrible thing about the movie business is that everybody who's ever seen a movie thinks they can make one," Potter muses. "It fascinates me. People go to the opera, and they don't think they can go home and do Wagner's *Ring Cycle* or Verdi or whatever. But people see a movie and first thing you know, they're saying, 'I could do a better movie than that.'"

Elizabeth Robinson of Sundance has come across the same kind of naïve assurance time and again. She advises beginners to "think of screenwriting as any other craft that you have to learn. Lawyers go to law school and are associates for years before they made a lot of money and are doing what they really want to do. Screenwriters evolve the same way. You shouldn't think, 'I can write that in two weeks and get a thousand-dollar check in the mail.' It doesn't work that way, and to think that is very self-defeating."

So what does it take to write a screenplay? And how does one best learn the ropes? Marina Feleo Gonzalez, a Filipina film and television writer of 18 years and founding member of the Philippine Screenwriters Guild, begins her screenwriting classes at Film/Video Arts in New York City with a simple but critical lesson. She repeats the 10 cardinal rules preached by Mario Puzo, author and screenwriter of *The Godfather*: 1) write, 2) rewrite, 3) rewrite, 4) rewrite, 5) rewrite.... Feleo Gonzalez goes on from there to film grammar, character development, the principles of montage, and dialogue. She teaches her students to write synopses, treatments, storylines, and sequences. They learn about creating rich, textured environments for their characters. They learn about screenplay format. "Their misconception is



In her upcoming feature film *Daughters of the Dust*, a period piece set in Gullah country, Julie Dash uses black dialogue as the model for the film's overall structure. Dash, the writer/director, is trying to fashion an alternative to the classic story structure based on Western narrative traditions.

Courtesy filmmaker

that all you have to do is write down thoughts and, voilá, you have material for a script," she says. "So I caution them that not all good stories are translatable into film, because a film script demands the recreation of scenes that can be captured by a machine—the camera—and reenacted by a team—actors, director, etc.—and finally spliced in an editing machine."

As with any literary form, screenwriting has its conventions which, when examined, are usually not arbitrary, though at first they may seem so. Robert Seidman recalls reading a friend's script while sitting by a pool in Los Angeles. Another writer walked by, looked down at the script and said, "That's no good." Seidman looked up at him, puzzled. "Too much dialogue," the writer explained. "The dialog block is too thick. It's also too long a line." Seidman elaborates, "You're only allowed a certain number of characters in a typed line of dialogue—and everyone can see it."

As Feleo Gonzalez explains, "Format simply disciplines screenwriting. For example, you can't go overboard with dialogue, because you have to make the characters move. Or you can't write too much internal dialogue. You have to *show*. This is format—knowing how to express your story in filmic language." While Feleo Gonzalez's students are informed about many aspects of screenwriting, there is one area they seem most anxious to learn—story structure. This is where novice writers tend to have the most trouble, although at first they might not know it. After having written several scripts, Terrel Seltzer now believes, "The most important thing is not dialogue, it's structure. That's what makes a good script."

Seltzer's first screenwriting experience was with Wayne Wang, whom she describes as a very intuitive director. When working on material for Wang, Seltzer thought less about overall structure than individual scenes, lines of dialogue, and the characters' relationships. With *Chan Is Missing* there was not even a script to speak of, and the actors largely ad-libbed. There was the idea of a sleuthing story, and Seltzer and Wang knew *not* knowing who Chan was would be a central theme. Then, for the script, "We'd sit in a deli during the four hours my kid was in day care, and we'd talk about the people we knew in the Asian community. I'd come up with a series of lines and ideas for locations and scenes that could happen there." Seltzer would jot these down, and Wang would use these notes as a shooting script. But, says Seltzer, "We had a structure in mind that didn't work—which was apparent as soon as Wayne went into the editing room." Wang often does his story structuring there anyway, according to Seltzer, and in the case of *Chan Is Missing*, such key elements as the main character's voiceover came into the picture only at this late stage.

This kind of improvisational approach to structuring a film can occasionally work, as the success of *Chan Is Missing* demonstrates, but it carries a certain risk. For Wang's next film, *Dim Sum*, Seltzer wrote a full screenplay with dialogue. Again, Wang restructured the film in the editing room, virtually eliminating three of Seltzer's five main characters and focusing on the relationship between a mother and daughter. "I'm surprised Wayne could pull a film out of that story," Seltzer comments on the two lead characters. But she now acknowledges that her screenplay was weak in plot and had no subplot to speak of. "I didn't know anything about film structure, plot points, and so on. And the evidence is that Wayne could toss my scenes up in the air, and select and rearrange them. Then I read Syd Field, and it was a revelation—an eye-opener for me at that time—that there were *acts* in movies. Now it's ingrained."

One can't talk very long about story structure without having Syd Field's name come up. His two books *Screenplay: The Foundation of Screenwriting: A Step-by-Step Guide from Concept to Finished Script* [New York: Dell Publishinging Co., 1979, revised 1982] and *The Screenwriter's Workbook* [New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1984] have served as a practical guide for beginning screenwriters since they were first published. While new books on screenwriting are proliferating at an extraordinary pace, Field's manuals are still the touchstone to which all else is compared.

Field's books serve several purposes. They spell out conventional wisdoms—e.g., that one page equals a minute of film; that the first 10 pages are critical and must establish the dramatic premise, who the main character is, and the circumstances surrounding the story; that 120 pages is the optimal length for a feature, and few producers will read beyond that point. But Field is mostly read for his advice on classic story structure. In Field's opinion, all successful scripts follow a single paradigm. This consists of three acts—the set-up, confrontation, and resolution. "Your story always moves forward—it follows a path, a direction, a line of development from beginning to end," he writes. Consequently, Field advises his readers to know four elements before setting pen to paper: the ending (this comes first, he insists), the beginning, and the "plot points" at the end of Acts I and II. A plot point is defined as "an incident, or event, that 'hooks' into the action and spins it around into another direction,"—as when, in *Chinatown*, the detective played by Jack Nicholson discovers he has been set up by a fake Mrs. Mulwray when Faye Dunaway, the real Mrs. Mulwray, walks into his office and threatens to have his license revoked for publicly exposing her husband's affair. Field recommends that plot points fall between pages 22-27 and 85-90. Such specificity has earned him a reputation for being more rigid than subsequent authors of screenwriting manuals. Nevertheless, Field's paradigm and exercises have guided countless screenwriters through their first script.

Proliferating alongside the how-to books are innumerable courses and seminars. Though several hundred dollars more expensive, they too will teach the basic principles of screenwriting. Christine Nochese, producer of the documentary *Metropolitan Avenue* who is now writing a script for a dramatic feature, enrolled in the popular, three-day course taught by Robert McKee. Like Field, McKee emphasizes classical structure (although he additionally tips his hat to such alternatives as "minimalist" and "anti-plot" structures) and assumes his students are aiming for commercially viable screenplays. Nochese, who went into the course feeling a bit overwhelmed by her script, thinks she was helped by the course, even though she doesn't intend to stick to the classical rulebook. "A lot of the things he said I already knew, but he reenforced it in a managable way," she comments. Another McKee student is Julia Reichert, coproducer of *Union Maids* and *Seeing Red*. Like Nochese, Reichert is in the midst of writing her first feature-length dramatic film. Her initial draft was based on the Syd Field model. Reichert was on her third when she decided to enroll in McKee's course. Says



For *Conversations: Before the War/After the War*, a half-hour film by Karen Ishizuka and Robert Nakamura about the internment camps for Japanese Americans during World War II, Ishizuka wrote extensive character biographies as her script. The community members playing the lead parts then elaborated on these stories from their own experiences.

Courtesy filmmakers

Reichert of the seminar, "One of the most valuable components is its way of motivating you. It gets you up and going." In addition, Reichert says the course "helped me understand why certain scenes were weak. McKee stresses the concept that a scene must end on a different value than that on which it started—if it was positive, it must end on a negative, and visa versa. This way there's a twist in every scene, so the scenes move and advance toward the end." Reichert also plans to bend the rules—combining documentary and drama, for instance. "But that's okay," she says. "One shouldn't follow McKee and Field as a strict formula. They give you useful tools, and can help you trouble-shoot."

Beyond the books, the courses, and the seminars, people interested in screenwriting must of course look at films. Not passively, but with an eye toward how structure, characterization, dialogue, and a sense of time and place are created. Many of the writers and script readers interviewed for this article recommend that aspiring scriptwriters watch their favorite films and write down each scene—how long it is, what it accomplished—then find out where the scene and act breaks occur, formulate a step outline for the film, and analyze the story structure and why it works. Another common piece of advice is to read as many scripts as possible. Sarett suggests reading about 100 before beginning one's own, even contacting the studios and asking for their old scripts. Many produced scripts have been published, from Preston Sturges' works to John Sayles' *Matewan*. Beyond this, there are also books devoted to plot outlines of novels and plays, which Robinson believes can help writers sharpen their own storylines. "John Huston said that *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* comes down to one concept: greed," she notes. "You can see the dramatic line really clearly in these books. You see it's 'three men in the desert find gold.' 'A man loves two women.' They're obvious, but they can force people to think of their idea in those really simple terms, so you don't get a mish-mash of a script. You get a very clean line."

Before writing a script, Robinson advises, "You have to know what your aim is. If you want to write a Hollywood script, you'd better stick to the rules. If you want to do an independent picture, those rules aren't as important. But if you want to go through the studio system, where there's going to be a reader, a story editor, an executive, and people who have not made movies reading a script, that piece of drama you write had better be dramatic, or it's not going to get through." One important fact novice screenwriters often forget, adds Robinson, is that "the first thing that's going to happen to a script is it's going to be read by a reader. It's got to be a good read before it's ever a going to be a good movie." And it must be polished. Says Seltzer, "I'm still fighting the training I got with Wayne Wang. With him, the script didn't matter so much because you knew it would be changed. So it was never very polished or developed fully. In Hollywood, the screenplay is sold on the basis of it alone. It had better be polished." Sarett says that many of the scripts HBO receives are by writers who assume that if it's a good idea, HBO will supervise a rewrite. "Wrong," she responds. "If I can't read past page 15 because I'm confused or bored, that's a real problem."

But what about those writers and writer/producers who have no interest in Hollywood? What about those who want to experiment with narrative form, to deviate from the norm and pose alternatives to the three act structure? How necessary then is it to learn classic form, script format, and the rule of the first 10 pages?

Writer/producer Julie Dash advises that classical story structure is "a good thing to learn when you don't know what you're doing. Then abandon it," particularly if you're an independent who wants "to explore and expand upon narrative forms, like I'm trying to do." Dash uses a model that Syd Field and Robert McKee never mention for *Daughters of the Dust*, a dramatic feature she is writing and directing. Dash is currently rewriting the script in consultation with *American Playhouse*, which has picked up *Daughters of the Dust* for development and will be contributing production funds. The film is a period piece, set at the turn of the century on one of the remote Sea Islands in the Southeast—Gullah country. Gullahs, the descendants of Black slaves who remained geographically isolated from the mainland, to this day maintain a separate dialect and African-based rituals, culture, and religion. *Daughters of the Dust* is about the clash of Western and African religious-based cultures, told as a story about a family engaged in internal conflict. As Dash describes the film's structure, "The model is Black dialogue—how they recount tales, the grammatical patterns, the cadence, the way it digresses, goes forward and back. It's different from Western classic tall tales." This deviates from the strict linear model advocated by Field et al., as Dash knows well. "It's a non-linear structure. In film school, they say that doesn't work. It's full of flashbacks, which they say impedes the progress of the story. And it's narrated by three women. They say that's impossible to do—to have more than one narrator. It's something the classic rules wouldn't allow."

"If you want to experiment," Dash counsels, "first learn the structure, and then let your own inner voice guide you—which will be based on cultural idioms. These will define how you're going to unravel and tell your story. Just like there's a grammar of language, there's a grammar of film. Different cultures can have different film grammars. And I think it's positive to explore and develop these as an independent."

Karen Ishizuka, a writer, producer, and administrator at Visual Communications in San Francisco, is not impressed with the results of training in classic story structure. "There's a plot point here, a plot point there—and it's lost its vibrancy." She adds, "You bring life to writing, you don't bring classes in writing to writing. I encourage people not to be inhibited because of a so-called lack of education." Coming from a background in social and community work, Ishizuka has little interest in emulating the big-budget productions of Hollywood. With her film *Conversations: Before the War After the War*, she wanted to focus on content rather than the visual element. Ishizuka adapted this half-hour film from her play about the United States' concentration camps for Japanese-Americans during World War II, a study of "the long-term psychological effects of injustice on the pysche and personhood," which she had intended to be used for community organizing. The film departs from convention in numerous ways: it bridges documentary and drama, uses non-actors in dramatic parts, eschews voiceover commentary for cards with text providing historical information, and is cinematically spare, with talking heads shot in a studio in black and white.

Ishizuka's approach to the script likewise departs from the norm and offers, in her view, a model for community-based filmmakers working on

a limited budget who are interested in exploring dramatic forms. In lieu of a traditional script, Ishizuka wrote extended biographical sketches—"they were almost short stories"—of the three main characters, which were given to several community members/actors. "It was not so much a verbatim script as a whole feeling around each person," Ishizuka explains. "I encouraged them to ad lib and bring in their own experiences, things from their background." She believes the players opened up much more acting a role than they would have in an interview. "It was like psychodrama. A person won't disclose much about herself if she is interviewed. But if she's playing someone else, she will." Ishizuka encourages low-budget producers, particularly those making social-issue films, to try this method of working. In addition to alleviating the financial burden entailed in employing professional actors, the cast's first-hand experiences can breathe life into the script, while also allowing the filmmaker to work with and organize community members.

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One of the main differences between writing for the big league studios or television and writing for an independent producer is the number of viewpoints involved. When dealing with studios, "There are many, many chefs in the procedure. There are 106 vice presidents, and everybody has to have an opinion," cautions Seidman. "The greatest thing about working with independents is the absence of bureaucracy in the steps between the conceptualization of the idea and its fruition in the form of a decent draft of a script."

When a writer works with a producer, the feedback begins at the beginning. Generally, they sit down for a preliminary discussion, at which time the producer tells the writer which, if any, lead actors are lined up and what the budget will be. "The budget affects the way you conceive the entire picture," says Potter, "from the way you design everything down to the number of extras." A storyline is agreed upon and scene breakdowns might be discussed. The writer will then usually pull together a script outline or treatment, and again sit down with the producer to hammer out the differences in opinion. After the first draft is written, another such session occurs, and so on.

Of course, the degree to which a writer makes the producer's desired changes varies greatly, depending on their relationship. Feleo Gonzalez, for example, is very firm about the kinds of alterations she will allow. "I've gained a hard-earned reputation. I've pulled scripts from producers and directors who couldn't see eye to eye with my vision, whose first response is to rewrite," she states. Her position grew out of a hard-luck experience with the film *Once a Moth*. Produced in the Philippines in 1976, it tells the story of a Filipina nurse whose brother is shot and killed by an American GI who mistook him for a pig. The nurse goes to court, and discovers they have no jurisdiction over the U.S. military bases, where the incident happened. Feleo Gonzalez' script concludes with the nurse organizing a demonstration against U.S. occupation of Philippine territory. During the time the film was made martial law was in effect, and the bases were becoming a sensitive issue. Consequently, the director changed the film's ending. Rather than leaving the courtroom and going to mobilize opposition, the nurse witnesses an accident: an American GI on a motocycle is hit by a jeep and needs medical attention. The film ends with the question 'Will she help him?' unresolved. Feleo Gonzalez complains, "The director shifted the emphasis from her as a Filipina woman to her as a nurse," depoliticizing her actions after the revelation in the courtroom. Twelve years later, "The film still follows me everywhere. It made me realize what Igmar Bergman says is true: 'A film is forever.'"

The screenwriter's give and take with producers or directors can be a positive experience, as well. Novelists, playwrights, and others who are used to working alone often enjoy this collaborative aspect of screenwriting—particulary when the input and influence go both ways. When Seidman was hired as a writer on *Margaret Mead: An Observer Observed*, the film was conceived as a documentary. But after working on it a while, Seidman began to see the dramatic possibilites of the material. He wrote a sample scene, and, on the basis of it, he and producer Virginia Yans-McLaughlin were convinced that they should include stylized reenactments to supplement the documentary segments and footage shot in the field. Seidman describes one of these scenes, where Mead first meets her future husband and anthopologist Gregory Bates in New Guinea. "They're discussing all sorts of things and evolving a theory of culture and personalities, while at the same time Mead's current husband is getting kicked out and Bates and Mead are falling in love. It's incredibly charged erotically, it's incredibly charged intellectually, it's a history of anthropology right there, and you can't do that in a documentary. It just wouldn't work." In turn, when Seidman was writing the dramatic scenes, Yans-McLaughlin had her share of input. Seidman welcomed it: "I was having trouble translating Mead's language and the language of anthropology into something that was smoother and more easily absorbed. I would get stuck literally, because I was afraid of deviating too much from Mead. Ginny has a very good ear. She would cut me loose and say, 'No, that sounds too academic.'"

Sometimes beginning screenwriters and first-time dramatic directors will team up to learn the ropes together. When Mary Dore, coproducer and codirector of the feature-length documentary *The Good Fight*, decided she next wanted to do a dramatic film, she began searching for a writer to collaborate with, rather than someone with a finished script. Lisa Wilde was then a screenwriter with several unproduced scripts to her name who wanted to work closely with a director. Dore and Wilde got together after a mutual acquaintance played matchmaker. The two have subsequently written a treatment for a feature comedy, a screenplay for a comedy/thriller, and *Shelter*, a half-hour drama about a homeless woman institutionalized against her will. *Shelter* was produced this year under the auspices of the American Film Institute's Directing Workshop for Women. For Dore and Wilde, learning to communicate was key to a successful relationship. According to Dore, "It took me months to learn how to criticize" and to get over apologizing for making suggestions and comments about Wilde's script. Changes in *Shelter*'s screenplay occurred up to the day of the shoot. "We both gain a lot from this partnership," Dore says. "I get to do some of the writing, but I mostly I get to have a product that I *want* to work with. Lisa gets a film that ultimately reflects her vision—as opposed to giving up the script—because she's been involved from beginning to end also."

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Dore, Nochese, and Reichert are among a growing wave of independent producers moving from documentary to drama. What are the main differences in approaching the script, and what are documentarians least prepared for when tackling dramatic writing? Nochese answers, with a laugh, "Narrative filmmaking is *very hard*. I found that I'm good with actors. But it's hard to previsualize and prethink. It's not good for people who like to think on their feet. That may be great for documentary producers, being surprised by things, but not for drama."

According to Potter, "For people out of the wing-it school of documentary, it's the realization that making a fiction film is mostly a controlled situation. You can't just say that in the middle of shooting, 'Hey, it really might be wonderful to get this other angle,' because getting that other angle means relighting that set for three hours at x-dollars an hour. So you've got to have much more clearly defined what your goals are before your shooting begins."

Documentary producer Meg Switzgable, who is also making her first dramatic feature, likewise enjoys the spontaneity possible in documentary. But when writing the screenplay for her dramatic feature *Passing Through Linden*, she clearly saw the need for extensive preplanning. "In documentary, the structuring comes in the editing process," Switzgable explains, likening her approach there to that of a journalist whose story is ultimately shaped by the material that emerges from the interviews. For *In Our Water*, her documentary on a community's drinking water that was contaminated by a local landfill, Switzgable did not write a script, just a series of notes to herself prior to shooting the interviews. "The opposite happens in dramatic film, where work is done in the beginning, before the shoot." For Switzgable, the script is "the foundation of it all." Searching for an analogy, she asks, "Are you familiar with MIT's project in artificial intelligence, where they



Documentary producer Mary Dore collaborated with screenwriter Lisa Wilde to make Dore's first dramatic film, *Shelter*, a half-hour work based on the story of Billy Boggs, a homeless woman institutionalized against her will. Dore and Wilde have continued their partnership, writing several more dramatic features.

Courtesy filmmaker

created a map of Colorado? You can pick any point on the map and zoom in. I want to have a script that's the overall map." Zooming into the script means going to the storyboard which, in Switzgable's case, is a state-of-the-art computer simulation system initially developed by her coproducer Thomas Brown for Francis Ford Coppola, who wanted to bring the editing process into filmmaking at a much earlier stage. With the script as blueprint and the animated, real-time storyboard as its very specific elaboration, Switzgable can go into the shoot knowing exactly what should happen. The control a director gains this way isn't constraining, Switzgable believes, but rather frees him or her to concentrate on working with the actors, rather than worrying about setups.

For Switzgable, one of the most difficult parts of making the switch from documentary to drama was being able "to pull away from the details of the issue, and focus on people. In documentary, the details of the issue can be foregrounded. But in a dramatic film, you want to be moved by the story of the people, and the issue comes into the story through them." For a writer to create full-bodied characters whose actions carry the story, rather than two-dimensional mouth-pieces, requires practice and skill. The smaller the part, the more difficult characterization becomes. In Dore's experience, "It's really tricky. In our earliest script, I think we had trouble, except for the major characters, giving people enough different voices. We've gotten better at it." Wilde adds, "A big part of this is being able to see and listen in life, so you can pick up things and process them, and start to break speech apart to hear what it is that a person from the South is saying that makes him different from a person from the North, and hear what language a 60-year-old woman uses."

One of the benefits of crossing back and forth between documentary and dramatic screenwriting is the possibility of spinning-off stories. Switzgable's *Passing Through Linden* is a case in point. The film is a mystery/romance set in the industrial town of Linden, New Jersey, and uses a toxic waste catastrophe as its dramatic hook. The idea for the film grew out of a combination of two experiences: Switzgable's work on the documentary *In Our Water* and her childhood memory of Linden, which she and her family drove through en route to the beach. Linden, now known as Cancer Alley, "was where everything converges: highway, airport, waterway. The scene was awesome, with flames, steam, and a horrible smell. It mesmerized me, and was almost archetypal in its imagery." Years later, Switzgable's work on *In Our Water* provided an intellectual context for this memory, and the idea for a dramatic feature on toxic waste and industrial intrigue was born. Similarly, Potter has turned documentary subjects into feature material on several occasions. Out of *The Exiles*, his most recent documentary project, grew the script for *Surrender on Demand*, which tells the story of an emergency rescue committee set up in Marseilles during the French Occupation that smuggled people out of the country to safety. Potter, a seasoned writer who has learned how to use his time wisely, says, "I'm always looking for angles in documentary to make fiction."

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Potter offers some parting words of advice: "For all those young, aspiring writers—go to med school. It's safer." Otherwise it's a life of feast or famine. "Mostly famine," he adds. In a more serious vein, Potter stresses that being a screenwriter involves more than learning the lessons of Syd Field. "You've got to try to become a person. What you're doing is expressing the nature of your humanity. In any kind of writing, life experience counts more than a lot of other things. You can see it immediately when you look at a picture and you know right away this person didn't have a clue as to what those characters and that lifestyle was about. The first step in any form of art is to develop your humanity, your knowledge of people, the world, human psychology...as well as watching a lot of movies."

Good writing takes time to develop—and to do. When Julia Reichert went to Sundance's writing workshop, she was surprised to learn that two years on a script and seven or eight drafts were not uncommon among her fellow participants. She's now on her fourth, and knows it still has a long way to go. Julie Dash's *Daughters of the Dust* went through nine drafts over a period of 10 years. While Feleo Gonzalez might be able to write a script in two weeks, she says it's only because she has been carrying the story in her head for years, mentally writing and rewriting scenes, and adding details drawn from sundry experiences. As she and other screenwriters never tire of pointing out, writing is not just an isolated task. It is in many respects a way of life. This is the message Feleo Gonzalez wants her students to understand when she outlines the components of a good screenwriter: "They're always observing and absorbing. When I came to New York, I'd always see people with Walkmen. So I caution people, 'Never, never do that! A screenwriter should never shut out the world.' Because you want to accumulate as much as possible wherever you are—how people speak, how a place sounds.

"A screenwriter should have ears attuned to sound. Eyes that are sensitive to interesting characters. And a mind that can store in his or her mental file scattered scenes that the screenwriter could dig into when writing a script." But above all else, Feleo Gonzalez teaches, "One must have a capacity to *rewrite*."

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EDINBURGH ITINERARY '88



Jürgen Böttcher filming *The Kitchen* (1987), which was presented at the Edinburgh Film Festival in a retrospective of his films.

Photo: U. Eifler

Mark Nash

Claire Johnston, who died last year, was a key figure in the Edinburgh International Film Festival's work in the 1970s. She co-organized the first Feminism and Cinema Event in 1972 as well as the series of conferences, publications, and retrospectives that came to be regarded as one of Edinburgh's most distinctive contributions to film culture. Claire was also a member of one of the women's movements' first filmmaking organizations in the U.K., the London Women's Film Group. In the 1970s, I worked closely with Claire organizing several conferences for the Independent Film Makers Association and the Society for Education in Film and Television. And, as editor of *Screen*, I collaborated with Claire on a number of projects.

I visited the Edinburgh festival this year to attend the Claire Johnston Memorial Lecture, delivered by Australian feminist theorist and critic Meaghan Morris, and to catch a few of the films shown during the fortnight of the festival. Claire's written work has been very influential—from "Notes on Women's Cinema as Counter Cinema" to "Maeve," her essay on Pat Murphy's film of the same title—and her articles addressed questions ranging from women's cinema in Hollywood to issues of cultural difference and independent cinema in Ireland, a country where she had deep personal roots. The festival organizers decided that the best way of honoring Claire's memory would be with a lecture "continuing Claire's cultural project." The choice of Morris was intended to indicate the importance of Claire's work for scholars and practitioners of media and cultural studies in many Anglophone countries and to show that her brand of polemical theorizing is still very much alive. I can remember Claire attributing her love of talk and of polemic to her Irish background and her training at the London School of Economics in the 1960s, when academic life and work were strongly politicized.

Morris chose to frame her talk with poems by Sydney poet John Forbes. One of his best-known recent poems, "Watching the Treasurer," deals with the writer/viewer's fascination with the media presence of the Australian Federal Treasurer, Paul Keating. Keating has been able to use all the resources of the media, not only to divert attention away from the increasingly right-wing policies of the Australian Labour Government but to create a new consensus that dominant political and economic thinking—or, rather, ideology—uses as a benchmark. Morris used Keating's poems to introduce a discussion of the "politics of affect"—the establishment of reality through media credibility management—and the "fine-tuning of affect." And she was particularly interested in discussing "the scandal of contemporary cultural studies." In Australia, cultural studies has become preoccupied with the minutiae of popular culture and the notion of popular culture as resistance. By and large it has refused to deal with economic arguments and the way the media has been restructured to support those economic arguments: Australia's cultural industries are more monopolized than almost any Western country. In her lecture, Morris explored the sexism, racism, and paternalism of much of that discourse. She described how Eurocentric subjectivity followed the European settlers to Australia, where British working-class culture was imported with the British migrants. British cultural studies, she pointed out, is a more recent emigrant, academics choosing transportation (as some of them see it) rather than unemployment under Thatcherism. Yet there are differences between exploring pub culture in Birmingham, England, say, and in Alice Springs, Australia. For instance, the legacy of genocidal racism in Australia must be faced and not confused with nostalgia for British working-class culture.

Claire was involved in debates with British cultural studies in the 1970s when the politics of psychoanalysis was much more at the fore and the cultural left in Britain was divided between notions of reforging subjectivities and celebrating opposition. She was concerned with both sides of

the argument and was one of the few *Screen* editorial board members who supported a dialogue some of us were attempting with cultural studies at that time. Her political experience, particularly in the women's movement, made her both an adept factionalist as well as an ardent opponent of factionalism.

To return to Morris' lecture. She was also concerned that discussions of "culture" did not obscure the real economic determinants of people's lives. As filmmakers know only too well, economic issues pursue most people relentlessly. There is never enough money for making films. Critics happily ignore economic determinants on film culture to engage in analyses of form and content, often ignoring the issue of why money is made available for the production of one film and not another.

As both a friend and colleague of Claire's, I was somewhat skeptical about this mode of honoring her intellectual achievements. I felt Claire's friends involved with the Edinburgh festival had not been able to find a way of honoring her personally as well as intellectually. Though she would have enjoyed the energy, humor, and intelligence of Morris' talk—and it undoubtedly did continue the spirit of Claire's work—she would also have expected a good wake. A recent issue of *Framework* (Number 35) contains a number of tributes to Claire, and reading these balances the Edinburgh event. In one tribute, Lesley Stern remembers the strains of the Oedipal dramas of 1970s "*Screen* theory" and comments on how feminist film theory has survived longer and is more visible now than ever. At the same time she points out, "Despite the apparent entrenchment of feminist film theory as a discipline, there are still very few women in established and secure positions within academic institutions (i.e., within a structure that economically supports writing) and very few feminists making films outside the alternative circuit."

Those who continue "terrorist excursions," not just in writing but in the everyday operations of institutions, are marked as both formidable and anachronistic: "They are trouble, they are less attractive as a proposition than the 'less political.'" It was Claire's misfortune to become a victim in that scenario. She was too polemical, too political, too feminist. It was a pity that we had no time to talk about that, our feelings for Claire, and for the work that we were involved in together.

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Edinburgh no longer holds special "theoretical" events every year. The focus is on films, and this year, as always, I found a number outside the mainstream features that a U.K. audience could only find at Edinburgh, which remains an important festival for that reason. But since the festival lacks a market, it is dwarfed by the prestigious cultural festival that runs concurrently and is always in danger of becoming a sideshow.

One of this year's features was a seminar and screening program presenting the work of independent filmmakers in Australia. Australia has a very active independent sector working with meager state and federal funding, which is gradually becoming better known in Europe and the U.S. To British eyes, the work is often refreshingly political and anti-television in its aesthetics (the U.K. having lost its oppositional independent sector with the advent of Channel 4). At the same time, this Australian cinema often shares a lack of strategic focus evident in U.K. independent cinema during the seventies. This strain of Australian filmmaking is very diverse: theoretical films like Laleen Jayamanne's *Song of Ceylon* (1985) or explorations of Australia as postmodern kitch, e.g., Gibson's *Camera Natura* (1986), side by side with accomplished student films exploring Australian masculinity—*Roadside Cafe* (Jane Castle, 1988)—or the urban power games of aboriginal teenagers—*Nice Coloured Girls* (Tracy Moffat, 1987). Unfortunately the Australian film bureaucracies are more interested in funding their mainstream competition with Hollywood than developing an international profile for their independent cinema. At Edinburgh these films met a similar fate since both the screenings and seminar were badly publicized.

Then there was a retrospective program of films by the East German artist and documentary filmmaker Jürgen Böttcher, the first outside of the GDR. Böttcher is virtually unknown to the filmgoing public, but within the German filmmaking community he is a moral and artistic authority. The program at Edinburgh demonstrated that his films deserve to be much more widely seen abroad.

In the 1950s Böttcher's artwork was regarded as too formalist, existentialist even, by the authorities. He turned to cinema and graduated as a director from the German Film School in Potsdam-Babelsberg in 1960. His first film, *Three of Many* (1961), is a closely observed portrait of three artist friends, employing a very fluid camera style—British Free Cinema comes to mind. This work was heavily criticized at the time for its personal tone; a scene showing a worker at home, sitting in his rocking chair with bare feet was particularly criticized. It was the first GDR documentary to be shelved. Twenty-seven years later it was allowed to be screened publicly in East Berlin. In addition to earlier works, the festival offered three recent films about Böttcher's art of painting on postcards of famous paintings, inspired by Werner Nekes and Stan Brakhage.

Böttcher's cinema is influenced by Brecht and Neo-Realism. It attempts to reconcile the poetic with the epic and the social. In the words of Kraft Wetzel, who organized the Edinburgh season, his films draw their strength from the real world and pay tribute to the struggles of ordinary people. Böttcher struggled to introduce sync sound commentary as opposed to the dominant moralizing voiceover of documentary film: "Looking at, and by way of commentary, talking *about* these people didn't satisfy him." He wanted the workers whom



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Photo 6: Gas Chamber and Crematorium II, 25 August 1944

One of the aerial photographs of Auschwitz taken from a U.S. bomber in 1944 which appears in Haroun Farocki's *Images of the World and the Inscription of War*. British evaluators examined these surveillance photographs but failed to identify the concentration camp because they were not ordered to look for them.

Courtesy filmmaker

he continued to make films about over the years to speak their minds. Finally, in *Shunters* (1984) he didn't record any conversation. "By this time synch-sound interviews had become a standard feature in GDR documentaries and 'talking' heads films abounded. In a short film, he felt, he couldn't get beneath the surface by talking, given that most important subjects couldn't be openly discussed in films.... Keeping one's mouth shut could now be read as an oppositional stance."

For me, *Shunters* was one of the discoveries of the festival. Twenty-two minutes long (he'd wanted it longer), it simply depicts the shunting operations in a large railroad freight yard in the bitter cold of the Northern European winter. Breath freezes in the air; hands are rubbed; men run up and down the lines deftly inserting and removing brakeshoes to control the movement of the wagons. Snow drifts; the men drink tea and resume work. All the time trains enter and leave the yard, wagons cross the frame left to right, right to left, left to right.... Hypnotically, brilliantly edited, it should be a classic in film schools. It shows how to develop the simplest formal subject—movement—and yet retain a political consciousness. The viewer is always aware of the labor process—the skill, difficulty, and monotony of this work. Still, these workers have an existential heroism.

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There was also a retrospective of work by Sejun Suzuki. Like Böttcher, his films too are virtually unknown outside of his own country. And yet his gangster films and social dramas are among the most stylish—and the most controversial—pieces of cinema. In 1960s Japan, their very stylishness resulted in the Nikkatssu studio firing Suzuki on the grounds that his films were incomprehensible. An extended legal campaign brought restitution and recognition.

In an article in the festival brochure, Paul Willemen argues for screening Suzuki's films today: "If proof were needed regarding the relations between representations of sex and violence and actual behavior, the Japanese example proves it: there is no connection.... It is not sexual and violent imagery which has nasty social effects, but the social ideologies within which the imagery functions."

Tokyo Drifter(1966), one of Suzuki's classic films based on a popular song of the same title, is remarkable for its flamboyant use of color. *Tokyo Drifter* is an example of the genre of the *yakuza* film, which explores Japanese male bonding—the violence, the subordination of sex to honor—in exact parallel to the western. The hero, a modern *yakuza*, played by a popular teenage idol of the time, is exiled to the provinces as a result of a dispute within his gang in Tokyo. The hero's betrayal by his gang parallels the theme of the isolation of the individual developed in the modern western. As critics have noted, whenever the hero in *Tokyo Drifter* strikes a dramatic pose, whether drawing blood in a fight, standing in a deserted snowfield, or setting off on a journey, the title song plays on the soundtrack. The denouement takes place in a nightclub painted white to contrast with the splashes of red blood, and with every death, the strobe lights change color. This is certainly a major work, one which deserves to be more widely known, even if the complexity of its intertextual references can only be appreciated by aficionados of Japanese cinema.

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In addition to these retrospectives, several individual films at Edinburgh deserve mention. *Romance* (1988), by Brazilian Sergio Bianchi, met with divided opinion among festival-goers. Some found it crude and undeveloped. For me, however, the intersecting narratives that overlap but leave many loose ends and the roughness of the camerawork contributed to the film's appeal. British and U.S. cinema have become so dominated by the look and feel of advertising and television that I find it refreshing when a film doesn't take those values seriously. Another factor informing my judgement was the eccentric acting. The bulging eyes and eccentric movements of one of the actresses reminded me of that most famous of early Soviet film actors, Alexandra Khokhlova.

Romance concerns the death of Antonio Cesar, an intellectual who tries to expose an international deal involving farm pesticides. His girlfriend becomes more and more psychologically disturbed by his death. A reporter sets out to investigate the death, pins down the killers, and uncovers a plot against the last bit of virgin Brazilian coastline. Then, in a wonderfully cynical volteface, she is coopted when she agrees to organize a suitably sanitized memorial at the provincial city hall. At the same time, Cesar's gay roommate, who is seropositive for HIV, pushes his luck cruising for rough trade. It's impressive that a film can link the disaster of AIDS in Brazil with the cultural and economic disasters of rapid industrialization.

Another notable new film at the festival was *Images of the World and the Inscription of War* (1988), by West German Haroun Farocki. An impressive meditation on aerial photography, surveillance, and military research, the film reveals and examines the disturbing fact that Auschwitz was photographed by U.S. flyers on a bombing mission to Silesia. But the camp was not recognized by the British evaluators "who were not under orders to look for the camps and therefore did not find them" despite the fact that they are clearly visible in the photographs. Today, says Farocki, "Satellites orbit the earth and record almost everything that happens on the planet. How can these pictures be analyzed? How shall these pictures be remembered? Remember, the victims noticed nothing." The film ranges over the history of aerial photography and the shifts from artisanal to mechanized mass production. It links the totalitarian experiment of the Nazis with capitalism. We see wave machines, flight simulators, the development of mechanical forms for recognizing people and objects (allowing analysts to distinguish cars from buses)—all preliminaries to *Robocop*-style law-enforcement. As with his compatriot Alexander Kluge, documentary becomes a kind of fiction. Reality unfolds like a detective story.

Finally, it would be difficult to conclude any mention of Edinburgh this year without a brief excursion to Calton Hill, a collection of Greek Revival monuments overlooking the city, where Krzysztof Wodiczko organized one of his projections of still images onto public buildings. You approach the hill at night up a long staircase between high banks and emerge in an open green. To the left is the dome of an observatory with Margaret Thatcher's face, like that of a bloated goldfish, staring at you. Opposite are the columns of the National Monument. On each of the doric columns, facing Thatcher, as if victims of her firing squad, are projected elongated images of people: a drug addict, a homeless young man sitting on a suitcase, a bag lady, an unemployed man eating. Along the architrave of the observatory under the Thatcher image are the words "Pax

Brittanica" in Roman script, referring to the peace Julius Caesar imposed on Britain in 64 A.D. Above the images on the columns are the words "Morituri Te Salutant," the ritual statement spoken by Roman gladiator slaves before beginning combat in the Coliseum in front of Caesar: "Those who are about to die salute you." Wodiczko's dialectical montage encapsulates the hard political truths of British society today.

Mark Nash is an independent director and producer, currently developing projects for Channel 4 TV.

IN BRIEF

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser, director of the **FIVF Festival Bureau.** Listings do not constitute an endorsement & since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. If your experience differs from our account, please let us know so we can improve our reliability.

DOMESTIC

AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 8-14, IL. Formerly held in NYC, 1989 edition of 31-yr-old fest will be held at Sheraton International at O'Hare Airport in Chicago. Fest is major showcase for new nontheatrical film & video productions produced since Jan. 1987 & has been attended by over 800 media professionals, incl. media buyers & programmers from universities, public libraries, media centers, museums & school systems, as well as distribs, producers, critics & journalists. Last yr 360 films & videos in competition. Winning entries in each cat. receive Blue Ribbon (1st place) & Red Ribbon (2nd place). Blue Ribbon winners eligible for Academy Award nominations in doc & short subject cats. Special awards incl. Best of Festival Emily Award & John Grierson Award for 1st time film or video director showing outstanding potential in field of social doc. Fest cats encompass several topics, incl. art, culture, health & sciences, home-vid how-tos, commerce & business, media & public issues; fiction, documentary, animated & experimental entries accepted. Entries prescreened by juries across country. Several workshops on various topics also fest feature. Entry fees: $50-135. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Dec. 30. Contact: American Film & Video Assoc., 920 Barnsdale Rd., Suite 152, La Grange Park, IL 60525; (312) 482-4000.

BIG MUDDY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, February, IL. 11th yr of student-run competitive fest showcasing independent, alternative film & video in all genres, lengths & styles. $1500 in prize money awarded, w/ films & videos judged separately. Work must have been completed in last 2 yrs. Entry fees: $20-30. Formats: 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Dane Thompson, Big Muddy Film Festival, Dept. of Cinema & Photography, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL 62901; (618) 453-2365.

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BLACK FILMMAKERS HALL OF FAME FILM COMPETITION, Jan. 26, CA. Among many purposes of this competition are: discovery & encouragement of filmmakers who "address the rich complexity & variety of Black culture"; provision of a forum for maximum exchanges between filmmakers & viewers; definition of place & importance of film in Black history & culture; expansion of opportunities for Black filmmakers. Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame now 16 yrs old & has celebrated achievements of over 100 Black people in film industry. Cats for competition incl. animation, experimental, biography, comedy, documentary, drama, foreign, music & PSA, as well as a new film/video screenplay competition. Work should be completed since 1985. Awards: Best of Competition ($1000 & plaque), 1st runner-up ($500), 2nd runner-up ($250), Best of Category (certificates). Entry fee: $10. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: Dec. 15. Contact: Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame, Inc., Floyd Webb, 1221 B'way, Ste. 340, Oakland, CA 94612; (415) 465-0804.

CLEVELAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Apr. 6-16, OH. Each yr noncompetitive fest, now in 13th yr, programs 40-50 int'l fiction & doc features along w/ selected shorts from students & young filmmakers; large percentage of over 100 films shown are independent works & several are premieres. Several filmmakers attend w/ their films. Special program this yr pays tribute to National Film Board of Canada. No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Dec. 31. Contact: David Wittkowsky, Cleveland International Film Festival, 6200 SOM Center Road C20, Cleveland, OH 44139; (216) 349-0270; telex: 980131 WDMR.

NATIONAL STUDENT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Mar. 18-21, NY. Held in conjunction w/ 1989 NAMAC (National Alliance of Media Arts Centers) Conference in Rochester, NY, student-run fest will accept entries of student work produced at community media centers, K-12, undergrad & grad level after Jan. 1987. Work judged by student committee; entries screened on Greater Rochester cable public access channel. Submission on 3/4" preferred. Deadline: Jan. 20. Contact: Susan G. Hayes, Festival Committee, Visual Studies Workshop, 31 Prince St., Rochester, NY 14607; (716) 442-8676.

NEW ANGLE VIDEO FESTIVAL. April, NY. First yr of showcase accepting experimental videos up to 30 mins. long. Winning entries shown at Collective for Living Cinema & throughout NY boroughs. Entry fee: $20. Formats: 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Jan 30. Contact: Angle Intermedia, 300 Mercer St., Suite 11N, New York, NY 10003; (212) 228-8307.

NEW DIRECTORS/NEW FILMS, Mar. 17-Apr. 2, NY. An overview of world cinema, annual showcase—cosponsored by Museum of Modern Art Film Department & Film Society of Lincoln Center seeks new, undiscovered & unrecognized narrative features, docs & shorts. Now in 17th yr, program of 25-30 films plays to nearly sellout crowds (which incl. many critics, distribs & foreign buyers) in 450-seat Roy & Niuta Titus Theater at MoMA. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Jan. 3. Contact: Marian Masone, Film Society of Lincoln Center, 140 W. 65th St., New York, NY 10023; (212) 877-1800.

THIRD WAVE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, February, TX. For 4th yr, 4-day noncompetitive fest will present about 35 features, documentaries, shorts & videos that "show incredible range of formal & social concerns of women media artists." This yr's event to focus on Black & 3rd World women filmmakers. Sponsored by Liatris Media, created to promote exchange of ideas on media & culture w/ emphasis on the work of women, 3rd World & lesbian & gay media artists. Program also incl. panel discussions w/ several filmmakers. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Jan. 20. Contact: Linda Farin, Liatris Media, Box 4600, Austin, TX 78765; (512) 443-3620.

FOREIGN

FESPACO PAN AFRICAN FILM FESTIVAL OF OUAGADOUGOU, Feb. 25-Mar. 4, Burkina Faso. Biennial fest, started at the initiative of African filmmakers in 1969, has grown to be one of Africa's largest cultural events. This yr's fest, w/ theme Cinema & Economic Development, incl. several sections: Official Competition, open to films from African directors (2 from each country) & awards the Etalon de Yennenga prize; showcase for films for youth & African film & TV market; homage to Latin American cinema; homage to Ababakar Samb, Paulin Vieyra & Jean Michel Tchissoukou & 4th Congress of FEPACI (Pan African Filmmakers Association). In 1987, Prix Paul Robeson was instituted for films from Black diaspora; films by Black American filmmakers invited to compete for this award. Several hundred int'l guests, incl. filmmakers, journalists & critics, attend & over 500,000 people have participated in event. In 1987, more than 200 features & shorts shown, w/ 37 prizes awarded. All films must be completed in previous 3 yrs. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Jan. 1. Contact: Filippe Sawadoco, Festival Panafricain du Cinema de Ouagadougou, Ministere de l'Information et de la Culture, B.P. 2505, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso; tel: 33-27-84; telex: 5255 BF.

MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF FILMS & VIDEOS BY WOMEN, May, Canada. Cinema Femmes Montreal & Cinemama cosponsor fest, which has launched several new features by women directors. Last yr 84 films & 68 videos screened. Fest "committed to the popular & critical discovery of images & stories made by women artists." Film cats for prizes: Prix de Public for feature films (over 52 mins.) accepts work completed during last 2 yrs (fiction, doc, experimental); $2000 awarded. Prix de Public ($1000) for short films voted on by public. All entries should be Montreal premieres. Other sections incl. Panorama, overview of features & short grouped under different themes & section focusing on noteworthy films that have been overlooked. Prix de Public also goes to best video over 15 min. (narrative, doc, experimental). Fest also has retrospectives in film & video as well as special homages. Cinemama presents series of workshops, conferences & panel discussions during event. Accepted entries should be subtitled in French, w/ rare exceptions made by festival for original language accompanied by French translation of script. Fest programmer Carolynn Rafman-Lisser will be in NYC at FIVF offices Dec. 5-10 to prescreen possible entries. For information, contact: Kathryn Bowser, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012; (212) 473-3400. Entry fee: $25 CDN (feature), $15 CDN (video & short under 52 min.) Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2" (preview on cassette preferred). Fest deadline: Mar. 1. Contact: Festival International de Films et Videos de Femmes Montreal, 3575 Boul. St.-Laurent, Bureau 615, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H2X 2T7; (514) 845-0243; telex: 05-826852.

TAMPERE INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL. March, Finland. As a major short film fest in Nordic countries, competitive fest shows over 200 films from 30 countries to audiences of about 11,000. Int'l competition accepts about 70 animated, documentary & fiction/experimental works under 35 min. completed after Jan. 1, 1988 (docs can be up to 60 min.) & welcomes films for children in any category. Int'l jury awards Grand Prix (The Kiss, a bronze statuette & $3,600); Category Prizes (smaller statuette & $470); Special Jury Prize (smaller statuette & $470); Diplomas of Merit & other prizes decided upon by fest org. Separate competition for Finnish films. Other fest highlights incl. exhibitions, special programs, discussions & seminars. Several US independent films participated last yr. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Tampere Film Festival, Box 305, SF-33101, Tampere 10, Finland; tel: 358-31-35681; telex: 22448 tam sf; fax: 358-31-196196.

VIENNA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL (VIENNALE), Mar. 6-18, Austria. FIAPF-recognized noncompetitive fest, now in 28th yr, aims to "illustrate progress & continuity of film as an art form." Last yr about 130 int'l films shown & director has expressed interest in giving chances to young directors & ind. producers. About 15,000 attended fest. Most films shown are Austrian premieres & brings films to attention of Austrian distribs. Accepts long & short films. Although fest is noncompetitive, 1 prize—Viennese Film Prize of about $15,000 in film stock—presented to 1 director. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm; preselection on cassette. Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Helmut Dimko, Viennale, Urania, Uraniastrasse 1, 1010 Vienna, Austria; tel: 753284; telex: 113985 filmf a.

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IN AND OUT OF PRODUCTION



In *Reno's Kids: 87 Days + 11*, documentary filmmaker Whitney Blake follows unorthodox teacher Reno Taini, who helps would-be drop-outs take charge of their own lives.

Courtesy filmmaker

Renee Tajima

Kansas-based videomakers Dave Kendall and Jerry Schultz have just completed a one-hour documentary videotape on the first American tour of the national symphony from the People's Republic of China. **Chen & China's Symphony: The Central Philharmonic in America** is a coproduction of the Center for East Asian Studies at the University of Kansas and KTWU-TV, the PBS affiliate in Topeka. Producer Schultz and director/editor Kendall accompanied the orchestra on the midwestern leg of its tour. Central to the story is conductor Zuohuang Chen, the first Chinese sent to study conducting in the United States. He reflects on his career, from the persecution he endured during the Cultural Revolution to working with Seiji Ozawa at the Tanglewood Music Center in Massachusetts. To produce *Chen & China's Symphony*, Schultz and Kendall received grant support from the Kansas Arts Commission, production equipment from the University of Kansas, and postproduction facilities from KTWU. *Chen & China's Symphony*: Center for E. Asian Studies, Univ. of Kansas, Lawrence, KS 66045, attn: Jerry Schultz; (913) 864-3849.

The Cry of Reason, a testament to the spiritual and political journey of a South African theologian, has just been released by the Southern Africa Media Center, a project of California Newsreel. The 56-minute film, by Robert Bilheimer, Ron Mix, and Kevin Harris, chronicles the transformation of Reverend C. F. Beyers Naude, now 72 years of age, from a trusted pastor in the Afrikaner elite to a staunch supporter of the freedom movement for Black South Africans. His evolution is startling: son of a legendary Boer hero, Naude was the youngest member of the Broederbond, the Afrikaner secret society that invented apartheid. The country's most powerful whites were among his congregation, and many said that one day he would be prime minister. Yet Naude rejected it all after conducting a tour of the Black townships. After the Sharpeville Massacre, he came out in support of Black liberation and remained committed despite imprisonment and an eight year "ban." In *The Cry of Reason*, Naude himself, as well as Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Dr. Allan Boesak, and Reverend Frank Chikane, discuss apartheid, the future of South Africa, and Naude's own role in bringing about social change. *The Cry of Reason*: Southern Africa Media Center, California Newsreel, 630 Natoma St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 621-6196.

Everybody knows Dick or someone like him: a middle-aged, middle-class guy working at a mid-level management job and living in middle America. **See Dick Run**, a production of the Penis Envy Cooperative, is a political satire that pokes fun at the film and television industry's fondness for fragmenting women's bodies. In this 14-minute, nontraditional narrative, producer/director Ann Alter paints a deglamorized portrait of a "generic" American man—showing a day in the life of Dick as a slick, two-page color magazine ad minus the sex appeal. Through what Alter describes as "a claustrophobic visual and aural style," *See Dick Run* shows a unique view of masculinity. *See Dick Run* earned awards at the San Francisco Art Institute Film Festival and the Sinking Creek Film Festival. Alter is now in production on a biographical documentary on the life of Reverend Jan Griesinger, a lesbian minister. **No Need to Repent** portrays the courage and perserverance of a woman who goes beyond social prescriptions. Caucasian, raised in a traditional Christian American home, middle-aged, divorced, jailed five times, and openly lesbian, Griesinger challenges the audience to confront injustice. In production since 1985, *No Need to Repent* has been financed by a grant from the John Houk Memorial Research Fund, a University Film and Video Association Grant, and private donations. *See Dick Run* and *No Need to Repent*: Asymmetry Productions, 45 Sunnyside Dr. #1, Athens, OH 45701-1919; (614) 592-FILM.

AIVF member Tom Triman of Santa Ana, California, has just completed **A Spark of Being**, a scene from a feature-length film idea in which a pale student of unhallowed arts gives life to a hideous phantasm of a man—and then flees from his creation in horror. For the sake of economy, Triman filmed in the scene in miniature, using dimensional animation for the two protagonists, a combination of animation and live action for the shots of the student's "instruments of life" and animation performed on an Apple IIe computer for the visualization of "energy waves." The film

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was shot in super 8, using a backwinder for double exposures. Rick Sherman of Advanced Video Productions composed the film's symphonic score on an Emulator II computerized keyboard. *A Spark of Being* won first prize in the 1986 Cinemagic Short Film Search Awards and another first place for animation in the 1987 Association of Cinematic Arts Film and Video Festival. *A Spark of Being*: Canyon Cinema, 2325 Third St., Ste. 338, San Francisco, CA 94107, or Video-Sig, 1030 E. Duane Ave., Ste. C, Sunnyvale, CA 94086.

Whitney Blake's documentary feature **Reno's Kids: 87 Days + 11** opened for an exclusive theatrical run at the Biograph Theater in Washington, D.C. in October. *Reno's Kids* chronicles a semester in Jefferson High School's Wilderness Class in Northern California. Led by Reno Taini, a maverick teacher who believes that "teaching is more than just a job, it's a way of life," a group of would-be drop-outs learn what it means to take charge of their lives. Whether it's negotiating city contracts, helping to feed the homeless, or testing their own limits on a wilderness survival course—which they ultimately master and teach other teens—each day in Reno's class offers a new set of challenges. A finalist in this year's International Documentary Association Festival, *Reno's Kids* premiered on Channel 4-England's anthology series *True Stories* and won the Chicago International Film Festival's Gold Plaque, a Cine Golden Eagle, and the National Educational Film and Video Festival's Crystal Apple. *Reno's Kids*: Go For It! Productions, 500 S. Sepulveda Blvd., 5/F, Los Angeles, CA 90049, attn: Whitney Blake; (213) 457-6988.

Dostoyevsky meets MTV in **Bought & Sold**, a new feature-length videotape produced and directed by Michael Di Paolo. Shot entirely on location in New York City, the tape combines a highly stylized look with a verité feeling for the streets and people of the city. *Bought & Sold* tells the story of a sexually abused runaway played by Lisa Papineau. After a life of drugs and prostitution on

***A True Country*, a new videotape by Douglas Eisenstark, examines the influence of North American capital on the South American economy.**

Courtesy videomaker

the streets, she finally finds a way out with the help of a street vendor, only to be killed by the forces of corruption that grip the city. *Bought & Sold* features an original score by Robert Previte. *Bought & Sold*: Michael Di Paolo, Di Paolo Productions, 224 E. 47th St., New York, NY 10017; (212) 755-2410.

Downwind/Downstream, an award-winning film about acid rain and other threats to water systems in the Colorado Rockies, premiered at the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco in November. Directed by Christopher McLeod, the film documents the effects of mining, acid rain, and urban development in the Rockies—a source of water for 10-million people living in the region between Denver and Los Angeles. Toxic wastes released from abandoned mines and current mining operations, in combination with acid rain and snow that leach additional metals from mountain soils, damage aquatic ecosystems and forests. *Downwind/Downstream* is narrated by actor Peter Coyote and features the music of Ray Lynch, Dan Fogelberg, Brian Eno, and Kate Wolf. The film won awards at the American Film Festival, the San Francisco International Film Festival, and the National Educational Film and Video Festival. *Downwind/Downstream*: Larsen Associates, 1 Clyde Alley, San Francisco, CA 94107; (415) 957-1205.

Talking Baseball is producer/director Kevin Bender's look at baseball's greatest players and moments through the eyes and words of Hall of Fame broadcasters Red Barber, Mel Allen, Jack Brickhouse, Ernie Harwell, Curt Gowdy, and Jack Buck. Spanning over 50 years of America's favorite sport, from 1934 to the present, *Talking Baseball* will feature contemporary interviews with broadcasters together with vintage newsreel footage of highpoints of baseball history, and rare recordings of old radio play-by-plays. The 50-minute program, hosted by TV and radio personality Larry King, will be released on home video during the spring of 1989. *Talking Baseball*: Balltalk Productions, Box 7605, Berkeley, CA 94707; (415) 524-3585.

Douglas Eisenstark, in collaboration with Juan O'Brien, has completed the 15-minute video A **True Country (Un Pais Verdad)**. The tape takes a humorous look at the influence of North American capital on the South American economy. Its loose narrative centers around a mine owner named Roberto who, as the tape progresses, goes broke because his unprofitable mine produces only copper instead of more lucrative gold and silver. Roberto—played by Peruvian stage and film actor Reynaldo Delgado Huertas Del Pino—moves into his office, turns his car into a taxi, and then ends up living on the streets. Roberto is redeemed, however, when an Arizona-based copper mining company comes to South America for "a more favorable labor environment." Based on a script by Peruvian writer and critic O'Brien and directed by New York City artist Eisenstark, *A True Country* was shot in Arequipa, Peru on super 8 film and transferred to 3/4" video for editing. Eisenstark used a complex mixture of dissolves and wipes in editing, as well as English and Spanish intertitles to move the narrative along. *A True Country* earned first place for short fiction at the San Antonio Film Festival. *A True Country*: Douglas Eisenstark, 58 Ludlow, New York, NY 10002.

FIVF TAPE LIBRARY

The FIVF Festival Bureau has established a tape library of members' current works to expedite screenings for upcoming film and video festivals. Members interested in depositing their work in the library should contact: Kathryn Bowser, Festival Bureau director, FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012, (212) 473-3400. 1/2" and 3/4" tapes will be accepted.



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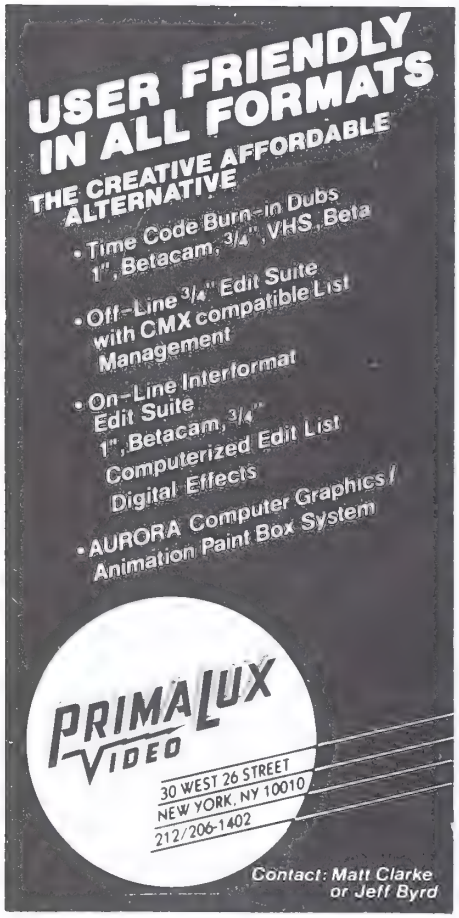
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The Independent's **Classifieds** column includes all listings for "Buy • Rent • Sell," "Freelancers" & "Postproduction" categories. It is restricted to members only. Each entry has a **250 character limit** & costs **$20 per issue**. Ads exceeding this length will be edited. Payment must be made at the time of submission. Anyone wishing to run a classified ad more than once must pay for each insertion & indicate the number of insertions on the submitted copy. Each classified ad must be typed, double-spaced & worded exactly as it should appear.

Deadlines for **Classifieds** will be respected. These are the 8th of each month, **two months** prior to the cover date, e.g., January 8 for the March issue. Make check or money order—no cash, please—payable to FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

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Conferences • Workshops

BOSTON FILM/VIDEO FOUNDATION workshops beginning Nov.: Advanced Amiga, Nov. 2; Writing & Selling for Film & TV, Nov. 5 & 6; Intro to MIDI, Nov. 7-14; Animation Workshop, Nov. 10-Dec. 8; Intro to Video Paint Systems, Nov. 12, Dec. 3; Doc. Scriptwriting, Nov. 14-21; Prod. Mgmt., Nov. 19 & 20; Amiga Graphics, Nov. 19; Intro to 3/4" Editing, Nov. 19-22; Developing Dramas for Interactive Video Disc, Nov. 28-Dec. 5; 16mm Film Editing, Dec. 3-13; Advanced Paint Systems: 3D Modeling, Dec. 4. Contact: BF/VF, 1126 Boylston St., Boston, MA 02215; (617) 536-1540.

ARTISTS WORKSHOPS IN ST. PAUL: Sponsored by Resources & Counseling with U.S. Small Business Admin. Time management workshop, Nov. 7; Business Filing in Minnesota, Nov. 21; The Artist & the IRS: Examination of the Latest Tax Law Changes, Nov. 15. Workshops take place at Landmark Center. Contact Daniel Gabriel, 416 Landmark Ctr., 75 W. 5th St., St. Paul, MN 55102.

UNIV. OF WISCONSIN/MILWAUKEE: Industry workshops sponsored by Univ. Outreach Communication Program. Making a Good Script Great, Nov. 5-6, Doral Inn, NYC; How to Break in & Advance, Package & Pitch Projects Plus Basic Dealmaking & Entertainment Law for the Layman, Nov. 19-20, Holiday Inn Downtown, Atlanta. Contact Noncredit Registration Office, UW-Milwaukee, 929 N. Sixth St., Milwaukee, WI 53203; (414) 227-3236.

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MEDIA ALLIANCE ANNUAL CONFERENCE: Rescheduled to Nov. 17-19 in NYC, will coincide w/ 20th anniv. celebration of Film/Video Arts. Contact: Media Alliance, c/o WNET, 356 W. 58th St., New York, NY; (212) 560-2919.

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VIDEO POOL accepting proposals from videomakers, artists & producers working in video, audio, film & other related technologies to instruct workshops. Please submit resumé, outline of proposed workshop & equip. requirements. Travel & honoraria provided for all accepted proposals. Contact Michael Drabot, Prod. Coordinator, Video Pool, 300-100 Arthur St., Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B-1H3, Canada; (204) 949-9134.

NEWTON TV FOUNDATION seeks proposals for the prod. of docs on important contemporary issues. Selected producers will be provided w/ 3/4" production & post-prod. facilities & other support. Proposals may be submitted at any time. To find out if project is suitable, submit 1-page typewritten project description & resumé or call. Contact Newton TV Foundation, 1608 Beacon St., Waban, MA 02168; (617) 965-8477.

Publications • Software

GRANTS FOR ARTS & CULTURAL PROGRAMS: New edition now available, $40/copy. Contact Foundation Center, 79 Fifth Ave., Dept. AV, New York, NY 10003; (800) 424-9836.

INT'L DIRECTORY OF FILM & TV DOCUMENTATION CENTERS: 3rd edition now available for compilation of over 100 entries describing world's major collections of published & unpublished material relating to film & TV. Price: $45. St. James Press, 233 E. Ontario St., Ste. 600, Chicago, IL 60611; (312) 787-5800.

SOMETHING PRESSING: GUIDE TO PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR THE VIDEO & FILMMAKER now available from NY Media Alliance. Booklet for artists includes tips on relating to press, distributors & exhibitors as well as practical info on conducting press campaigns & writing press materials. Also, annotated press list w/ details on deadlines, frequency of publication & audience served. Press list & lists of distributors & exhibitors across US also available on pressure sensitive labels in variety of formats. Media Alliance, c/o WNET, 356 W. 58th St., New York, NY 10019; (212) 560-2919.

SUPER 8 IN THE VIDEO AGE: *Using Amateur Movie Film Today*, 3rd Edition, by Bob Brodsky & Toni Treadway now available. Price: $16.95, or Spanish edition, $8. Contact Brodsky & Treadway, 10-R Oxford St., Somerville, MA 02143-1608; (617) 666-3372.

Resources • Funds

MASSACHUSETTS COUNCIL ON ARTS & HUMANITIES Contemporary Arts funding program deadline, Feb. 6: Art Exchange, provides funds for non-MA resident artists to present completed works in MA & MA artists to present completed works outside MA; New Works, funds for creation of new works for MA premiere. Open to artists in all disciplines. Proposals must be sponsored by MA cultural institutions. Contact Contemporary Arts staff; (617) 727-3668.

REAL ART WAYS Media Access Studio is multi-track recording studio & 3/4" video shooting & editing facility for creation, completion or documentation of work. Call for special rates to independents. Also, Fusion/Fission Regrants: Funds available for innovative interdisciplinary work by New England artists. Deadline: Jan. 1989. Contact Real Art Ways, 94 Allyn St., Hartford, CT 06103-1402; (203) 525-5521.

FRONTLINE: Hr-long weekly public affairs series broadcast nationally on PBS will consider proposals on public policy issues from doc. producers whose prior work has demonstrated ability to combine good journalism & filmmaking. Submit 1-2 page treatment or rough-cut of completed (or near completed) film on 3/4" or VHS. Deadline: Feb. 1 for 1990 season. Contact Marrie Campbell, series editor, *Frontline*, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA 02134.

SPAIN RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS: Council for Int'l Exchange of Scholars announces opening of competition for grants for individual research in Spain during '89-90 academic year. Eligible fields incl. arts & communications. Requirements: U.S. citizenship, Ph.D or appropriate terminal degree & sufficient competence in oral & written Spanish for proposed research. Appl. deadline: Jan. 1, 1989. Contact Robert Burnett, Spain Research Fellowships, CIES, 11 Dupont Circle, NW, Ste. 300, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 939-5414.

ASTREA FOUNDATION: Funds for women's orgs in PA,

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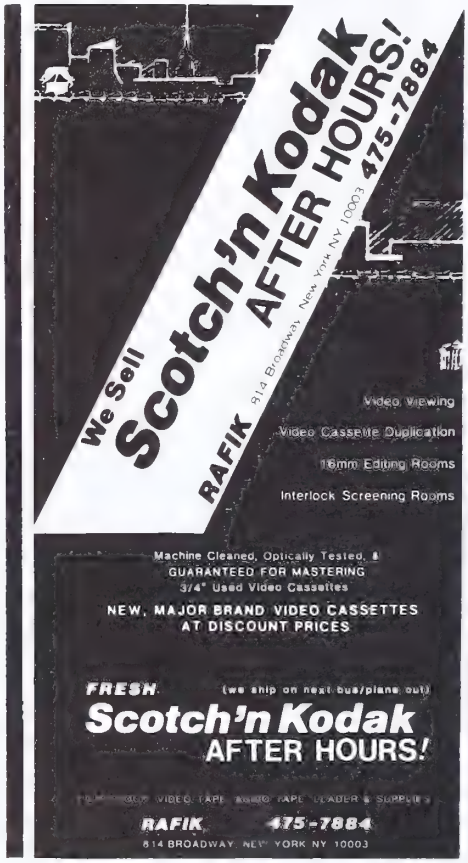
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CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING: Open Solicitation deadlines: Jan. 6 & Apr. 21. Contact: Television Program Fund, CPB, 1111 16th St., NW, Washington, DC 20036.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS grants deadlines: Jan. 30 for AFI/NEA film preservation program. Contact: Media Arts, NEA, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

FILM BUREAU of Film/Video Arts offers grants to NY State exhibition programs sponsored by nonprofit organizations. Matching funds up to $300 available for film rentals & up to $200 per speaking engagement for presentations by filmmakers, producers, directors, technicians & scholars. Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Charles Vassallo, Film Bureau Coordinator, F/VA, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003-4797; (212) 673-9361.

NEW YORK COUNCIL ON THE HUMANITIES: Call for proposals for Cultural Literacy in a Multi-Cultural Society, to support projects of free events for general audiences. Deadline: Dec. 15. Contact: NYCH, 198 Broadway, New York, NY 10038; (212) 233-1131.

CHECKERBOARD FOUNDATION invites applications for 1988-89 postproduction awards. 2-4 grants, from $5,000 to $10,000, awarded in spring 1989. Only NYS residents may apply. Deadline: Mar. 31. For appls, write Checkerboard Foundation, Box 222, Ansonia Sta., New York, NY 10023.

Trims & Glitches

KUDOS to Ellen A. Meyers, recipient of Certificate of Merit from Suffolk County Film & Video Fest for *Just Keep Going*.

CONGRATS to Joan Harvey who won gold film awards from the Houston Int'l Film Fest & Philadelphia Int'l Film Fest for *Voices in Dissent*.

CATHERINE RUSSO won 1st Place at the Montreal Women's Int'l Film/Video Fest for *Enough Crying of Tears*. Kudos!

CONGRATULATIONS to AIVF member winners of Western States Regional Media Arts Fellowships: Gregg Araki, Rose Bond, Carolyn Crowder, Arthur Dong, Mark Dworkin, Kayo Hatta, Lynn Hershman, Mark Kitchell, Lisa Leeman, Curt Madison, Donna Matorin, Laurie Meeker, Heather Dew Oaksen, Lucy Ostrander, Christine Panushka, Miguel Pendas, Jonathan Reiss, Marlon Riggs, Kim Shelton, Naomi Sodetani & Bruce & Norman Yonemoto.

KUDOS to finalists in the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's Open Solicitation: Irving Saraf & Allie Light, John Schott, Gene Searchinger & George Miller, Steven Okazaki, Hector Galan, Marlon T. Riggs, Rose Economou & Brian Kaufman.

CONGRATS to AIVF members who received New York State Council on the Arts Film Prod. awards: Camille Billops, Rachel Field, Ada Gay Griffin & Michelle Parkerson, Todd Haynes, Kathy Kline, Roland Legiardi-Laura, Michael Penland, Bob Rosen, David O. Russell, Maureen Selwood, Renee Tajima & Christine Choy, Dan Weissman & Lucy Winer.

PROGRAM NOTES

Martha Gever
Editor, *The Independent*

As communication and information systems become increasingly global concerns—a social development as much as technological—U.S. independent film/videomakers' interests and activities also expand internationally. Local and regional traditions and topics frequently inform independent productions, but the audiences for such work are not necessarily limited by geography. The widening awareness of projects like the the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers' *Hometown TV* touring program and *Deep Dish TV*, the composite of public access cable programs distributed via satellite, provide an excellent illustration of this observation. Independent film/videomakers often hope to distribute their work abroad and may also benefit from information about the work of their colleagues in other countries. That is why, as a reader of *The Independent*, you're likely to encounter a considerable number of articles about film/videomaking outside the U.S.

In order to understand the myriad relationships between film/videomakers in the U.S. and the media in other countries, it is not enough to invoke the metaphor of a "global village" united by electronic media. Institutional structures and histories of the media vary greatly from country to country. The kinds of articles devoted to different national situations published in *The Independent* during past few years cover topics as diverse as film audiences in China and video art exhibition at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris—both in the November 1986 issue. In the August/September 1988 issue, Roy Lekus unravelled the complexities of recent changes in the French television system. Reinhard Wolf's parallel article on West German TV—with particular attention paid to ZDF—appeared in April 1988, as did Karen Rosenberg's report on the effects of *glastnost* and *perestroika* on Soviet Georgian cinema. Rosenberg's interview with Wolf and his colleague Christiane Schauder, which included a detailed discussion of the conditions of super 8 production in West Germany, was published in March 1987. In our June 1987 issue entitled "The Other Americas," Geoff Pavere described some work by young independent Canadian feature filmmakers. In the same issue, Jane Creighton commented upon an eight-hour program of "Popular Video and Film in Latin America."

The implications of South African apartheid for U.S. independents who might exhibit work there was analyzed by Charlayne Haynes in the January/February 1986 issue and again debated in December 1986 and April 1987. For our January/February 1988 issue, South African writer and filmmaker Ntongela Masilela, who lives in West Berlin, contributed a historical analysis of African and Afro-American cinemas that proposed some theoretical methods for comparing those two histories. In October 1987, Alison Butler outlined the complex and sometimes contradictory relationships between the U.K.'s Channel Four and independent film/videomakers in that country. About year and a half earlier, in March 1986, the activities of film/video workshops in the U.K. and the collective production of the *Miners' Campaign Videotapes* were explained by Nottingham producers Karen Ingham and James Morgan in an interview I conducted with them.

This rather long list represents only the feature articles on international subjects that we have published in the past three years. We regularly report on film and video festivals in other countries as well as those held across the U.S. The "Media Clips" and "Field Report" columns are also open to news and profiles of individuals, events, organizations, and institutions that influence the production, distribution, and exhibition of independent media worldwide.

A recent example of this kind of reporting was the item by *Independent* associate editor Renee Tajima on the newly formed Kino Women International (KIWI), an organization of women film/video producers initiated by several film directors from Soviet Georgia last winter. As a magazine devoted to independent film and video *and* as an organ of AIVF, we will continue to follow the growth of KIWI, since this organization potentially can serve the interests of a number of our members. Conversely, we hope that our readers will become aware of the work of women from other countries through organizations like KIWI. Likewise, we have come to depend on writers from other countries to broaden our understanding of developments abroad. A good example of the benefits of cultivating an international correspondence is Mark Nash's report on the Edinburgh Film Festival in this issue.

One key element in *The Independent*'s international strategy is communication with organizations of independent producers outside the U.S. Last year we established a subscription system in cooperation with the Independent Film, Video and Photography Association, AIVF's counterpart in the U.K. Arrangements such as this make our international policy more than a project of importing and exporting information. Such an undertaking fosters more complex forms of communications with our IFVPA colleagues, exchanges that allow for the useful comparisons and fruitful provocations of national differences as well as acknowledging our common concerns.

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EDELMAN FAMILY GRANTS ANNOUNCED

On November 13 FIVF announced the first round of grants received through its Donor-Advised Film and Video Fund. The fund, administered by FIVF, consists of various grants from private foundations for projects dealing with specific issues. The Edelman Family grant is for projects that discuss, explore, or document social change. This year grants were awarded to Michael Moore of Washington, D.C., Stephanie Black of New York, and Jennie Livingston of New York. Moore received a $5,000 postproduction grant for *Roger and Me*, Black a $5,000 postproduction grant for *The Hands That Feed Us: H-2*, and Livingston a $2,500 postproduction grant for *Paris Is Burning*. Members of the Donor-Advised Fund panel were Barbara Abrash, Robert Stone, and Andrew Young. Abrash is an adjunct lecturer in Public History at New York University and coproducer of *Angie Debo*, which recently aired on *The American Experience*. Stone is the producer and director of *Radio Bikini*, which was nominated for an Academy Award, and a previous recipient of the Marjorie Benton Peace Film Award. Young is the director of *Voices from Kuna Yala*, an environmental documentary that received a grant from the Belden Foundation Donor-Advised Fund last year.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, an information clearinghouse, and a grant making program. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, foundations and organizations: The New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fund, the Beldon Fund, the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York, the Consolidated Edison Company of New York, the Benton Foundation, the Funding Exchange, and the dozens of organizations that advertise in *The Independent*.

AIVF THANKS

The Emergency Legislative Fund, used to advocate an Independent Program Service for public television, and the Emergency Tax Equity Fund, established by AIVF to support efforts to convince Congress to exempt independent film- and videomakers from the Uniform Capitalization rules of the 1986 Tax Reform Act [see "Media Clips" in this issue] have received contributions from:

Alan Barker, Skip Battaglia, Wayne Bell, Stephanie Beroes, Steven Borns, Virginia Brooks, Jacob Burckhardt, Joanne Burke, Bonnie Burt, Marc Chouaniere, Marianne Connor, Leora Eiferman, Karen Eisenstadt, John de Forest, Michael Golub, Joshua Hanig, Nina Hasin, Lisa Hsia, Andrew Jacobs, Nora Jacobson, Chas. Floyd Johnson, Debra Kagan, Linda O. Kramer, Jan Krawitz, Jack Levine, Bob Liljestrand, John Miglietta, Jon Oshima, Sarah Pirozek, Morteza Rezvani, Daniel Riesenfeld, Marlon Riggs, Tom Rippolon, Megan Roberts, SageFilms, Naomi Sodetani, Pam Strayer, David Williams, Barbara Zahn.

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